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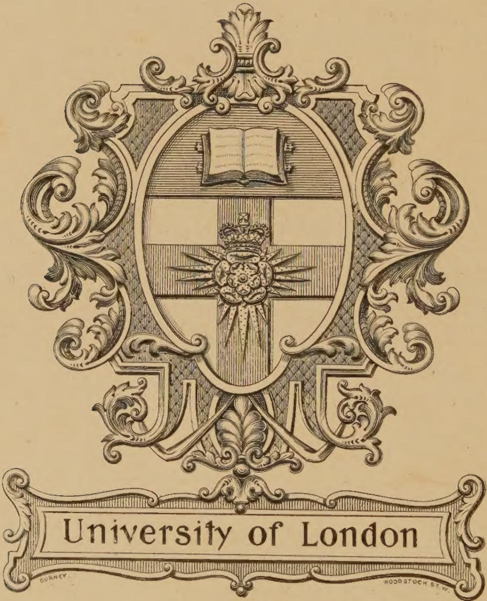

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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

47° VICTORIÆ, 1884.

VOL. CCLXXXV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1884,

TO

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF MARCH, 1884.

Second Volume of the Session.

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The Right Honourable *William Ewart Gladstone,* addressing himself to the Clerk, acquainted the House that Her Majesty having been informed of the resignation of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House, gives leave to the House to proceed forthwith to the choice of a new Speaker.

Then it was moved by *Mr. Whitbread,* "That Arthur Wellesley Peel, Esquire, do take the Chair of this House as Speaker:"—And the Motion being seconded by *Mr. Rathbone,* and the House unanimously calling Mr. Peel to the Chair, the Honourable Gentleman humbly placed himself at the will of the House; and he was by *Mr. Whitbread* and *Mr. Rathbone* taken out of his place and conducted to the Chair. Then *Mr. Speaker-Elect* thanked the House for the high honour they had conferred upon him:—And the Mace was laid upon the Table, and *Mr. Speaker-Elect* was congratulated by the Right Honourable *William Ewart Gladstone.* [4.50.]

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After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Blennerhassett:*)—After further short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

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Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Military Expedition to Assouan—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Gladstone .. 370

Adjournment of the House (The New Rules of Procedure—Rule 2)—Egypt—State of Affairs, and Policy of the Government, in the Soudan—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson*) .. 371

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 103, Noes 150; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Representation of the People Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 393

After long debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 119.]

Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill [Bill 4]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 466

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Warton*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 20, Noes 99; Majority 79.—(Div. List, No. 26.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Post Office Savings Banks (Perpetual Annuities)—
Indian Loan Act, 1881 (Terminable Annuity) Bill—

Order for Report of Resolutions [February 29] read 468

After short debate, Resolutions *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

MARKET TOLLS (IRELAND)—RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [15th February:]—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 469

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Return *ordered*, "of the values of the Market Tolls, of the Rates, and of the other sources of local revenue of each of the towns of Galway, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Portumna, and Gort, in the county of Galway:

"Return to state whether such towns enjoy the whole of the Tolls and other sources of revenue, or whether such income is mortgaged, and what is the amount of such mortgage:

"Return to state the date of such mortgage, and the purpose to which the money so raised was applied, particularly as to whether it was applied for local development or for the advantage of individuals:

"And, Return to state where the Tolls belong to one or more private individuals, and the dates of and parties to the grant, when such can be obtained from information accessible to the public:

"Form of Return:—Name of Town; Amount of Tolls leviable in such Town in 1883; Amount of Rates in 1883; Other Sources of Income in 1883; To whom Tolls belong: and, if not belonging to the Town, by what Title; Date and Application of Money when Mortgaged,"—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles W. Dilke*) 470

Licensing Acts Amendment Bill—*Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Caine, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Brown, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Williamson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 126] 470

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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 472

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection,"—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

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Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill—continued.

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they do provide a temporary bridge for the accommodation of foot-passengers during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge,"—(*Mr. Firth*) 487

After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they are empowered to receive evidence as to the necessity of erecting a foot-bridge during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge,"—(*Mr. Firth.*)

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DWELLINGS IN CROWDED DISTRICTS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the evils of overcrowding cannot in all cases be adequately met by the enforcement of purely sanitary regulations, and that it is therefore expedient that, in the case of certain public Trusts and Corporations having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, some relaxation should be made in the rules under which loans are at present granted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 509

After debate, *Previous Question* proposed, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*:)—After further debate, *Previous Question* and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

[House counted out.] [8.50.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5.

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE TWELFTH RULE (NOTICES ON GOING INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY)—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone 549

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment Bill [Bill 8]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Barry*) .. 551

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 72, Noes 235; Majority 163.

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Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*:—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPENDITURE)—THE VOTE OF CREDIT—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 607

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Medical Act Amendment Bill (No. 23)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord President*) .. 608
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* the 20*th instant.*

Army (Head-Dress)—Motion for an Address—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for Copy of the instructions received by the Committee of which Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Alison, Bart., K.C.B., was appointed President, on the subject of change in the head-dress of the Army,"—(*The Earl of Galloway*) 611
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Egypt (War in the Soudan)—The Military Operations on the Red Sea—Question, Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, Earl Granville:—Debate thereon 615
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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £370,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services" 676

After debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £164,750, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) 711

After further long debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Lord George Hamilton*:)—Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Marriages Legalization (Stopsley, Beds.) Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 125]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) .. 786

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Freshwater Fisheries Act Amendment Bill [Bill 57]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 28th February*] 787

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* 17th March, and to be *printed* [Bill 129.]

Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) Bill [Bill 75]

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Gibson*) 810

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS IN ENGLAND (SUNDAY)—MOTION FOR A RETURN—

Moved an Address for, "Return similar to No. 127, of 1882, and completed to the 29th day of September 1883, regarding the Arrests for Drunkenness on Sunday in England,"—(*Mr. Onslow*) 815

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (BRITISH INDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY) —RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company, for the conveyance of the Mails between the Port of Aden and the Port of Sindi, be approved,"—(*Mr. Courtney*) 816

After short debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (MESSRS. G. AND J. BURNS)—RESOLUTION .. 816
After short debate, Resolution *postponed.*

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION—
Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation in Session 1883 be referred to the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks.*) [2.15.]

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TUNIS—CONSULAR JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS—Question, Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, Earl Granville: Short debate thereon 817
COUNTY AND BOROUGH FRANCHISE (IRELAND) RETURN—Question, Observations, The Earl of Limerick; Reply, Lord Carlingford 824
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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Metropolitan Board of Works (Various Powers) Bill (by Order)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg*) 827
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class, in connection with any of the schemes included in this Bill,"—(*Mr. Lyulph Stanley*) 838
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required to be provided for persons of the labouring class by 'The Artizans' Dwellings Act, 1882,'"—(*Mr. Lyulph Stanley*) 847
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Moved "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to extend the time for taking the land which is necessary for the formation of the New Street from Southwark Bridge Road to Great Dover Street,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*) 848
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT)—
Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade 852
Leave to Committee to make a Special Report:—Special Report *brought up,* and read:—Report to lie upon the Table.

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

ARMY—COMMISSARIAT AND TRANSPORT SERVICES (EGYPTIAN AND AFGHAN CAMPAIGNS)—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British and Indian Armies in the recent Egyptian and Afghan Campaigns, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services,"—(*Dr. Cameron,*)—instead thereof .. 878

ARMY—COMMISSARIAT AND TRANSPORT SERVICES (EGYPTIAN AND AFGHAN CAMPAIGNS)—RESOLUTION—*continued*.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British Army in the recent Egyptian Campaign, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services,"—(*Dr. Cameron*,)—instead thereof 910

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply,—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PATRONAGE)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which the patronage conferred on the President of the Board of Trade by the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 has been exercised by him,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*;)—instead thereof .. 910

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided*, Ayes 101, Noes 53; Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn*;—SUPPLY,—Committee upon *Monday* next.

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PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN—LEGISLATION—Question, The Bishop of Rochester; Answer, The Earl of Dalhousie 958

MERV AND AFGHANISTAN—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Papers showing what communications have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, about Merv and Afghanistan, since the year 1881,"—(*The Earl of Lytton*) 958

After long debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Habitual Criminals Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Milltown*); read 1ª (No. 28) 1014

[9.0.]

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EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE LIST OF CASUALTIES—Question, Mr. Grantham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1046
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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY — *considered* in Committee — ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £370,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services" 1053

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £164,750, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After long debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 13, Noes 178; Majority 165.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

Original Question again proposed 1164

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

NAVY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £147,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for additional Expenditure arising out of Military Operations in Egypt" .. 1165

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 56, Noes 114; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Original Question again proposed 1167

Moved, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir John Hay*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 53, Noes 113; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 31.)

Original Question again proposed 1168

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Captain Price*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 46, Noes 111; Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Original Question again proposed 1176

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Thursday*; Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

Bankruptcy Appeals (County Courts) Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 118]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Solicitor General*) 1179

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday*.

Valuation (Metropolis) Amendment Bill [Bill 108]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1183

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (MESSRS. G. AND J. BURNS)—

Resolved, That the Contract with Messrs. G. and J. Burns, for the Greenock, Ardrossan, and Belfast Mail Service, be approved,—(*Mr. Courtney*) .. 1183

Working Men's Clubs Registration Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. John Holland, Mr. Francis Buxton, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 132] 1183

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Redistribution of Seats Bill—*Ordered* (*Admiral Sir John Hay, Mr. James A. Campbell*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 131] 1184

University of Cambridge (Borrowing Powers) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Raikes*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 133] 1184

[2.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 11.

NEW PEER—Alfred Tennyson, Esquire, created Baron Tennyson of Aldworth in the county of Sussex and of Freshwater in the Isle of Wight .. 1184

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGES OF FIVE AND SIX—MOTION FOR A PAPER—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the evidence given before the coroner's jury relative to the death of a child, aged eight years, who had been attending a school at Cheltenham, and whose death, according to the evidence, was caused by inflammation of the membranes of the brain, and hastened by the mental strain from overwork.

"That there be laid before this House Return of the number of children under the age of five years and under the age of six years attending schools which are subject to Government inspection,"—(*The Earl De La Warr*) 1184

After short debate, First Motion *agreed to*:—Second Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LEGISLATION—Question, Observations, Earl Stanhope; Reply, Earl Granville 1195

[5.15.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 11.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILLS—DELIVERY TO DOORKEEPERS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Standing Orders Nos. 203 and 214 be amended by leaving out 'Doorkeepers,' and inserting 'Vote Office,'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) .. 1197

Motion *agreed to.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Metropolis Water Bill (*by Order*)— 1197

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Thomas Chambers*) 1197

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Coope.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 152, Noes 197; Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 33.)

Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*:—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Moved, "That the Vote of Mr. Coope be disallowed,"—(*Mr. Firth*) .. 1238 —After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 36, Noes 235; Majority 199.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

Metropolitan Railway (*Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement*) *Bill* (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1243

Metropolitan Railway (*Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement*) *Bill*—continued.
After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir Thomas Chambers.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" After further debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 124, Noes 64; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 35.)
Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

Inland Revenue—Property and Income Tax (Ireland)—Assessments of Land—Surveyors of Taxes—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1265
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Royal Irish Constabulary — Sub-Inspectors—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1267
Court of Bankruptcy (Ireland)—Unclaimed Dividend Account—Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1268
Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill—Questions, Mr. M. Brooks, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1268
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Execution in Kirkdale Gaol —The Public Executioner—Questions, Lord Henry Lennox, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 1269

Thames River Preservation—Appointment of Select Committee—
Select Committee *appointed,* "to inquire into the operation of the Acts for the Preservation of the Thames, and the steps which are necessary to secure the enjoyment of the River as a place of recreation,"—(*Mr. Story-Maskelyne.*)
And, on March 27, Committee nominated:—List of the Committee 1270
[House counted out.] [8.10.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill [Bill 7]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Waugh*) .. 1271
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Elton.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 123, Noes 41; Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 36.)
Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Yorkshire Land Registries Bill [Bill 24]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1292
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Yorkshire Land Registries Bill—continued.

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Disused Burial Grounds Bill [Bill 46]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. J. R. Hollond*) 1307

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 63]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. H. James*) 1308

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Elton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

Vivisection Prohibition Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Reid, Mr. Firth*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 134] 1309

Beer Adulteration Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Barne, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Storer*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 135] 1309

[5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 13.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—DEFEAT OF OSMAN DIGNA (BATTLE OF TAMANIEB)—Question, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answer, Earl Granville .. 1310

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[5.15.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 13.

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH, TROWBRIDGE—"BURGESS *v.* CLARKE AND COLLINS" —Questions, Sir John Kennaway; Answers, Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1326

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL COMMUNICATION WITH TORY ISLAND—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1327

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DR. RAWSON, MEDICAL OFFICER OF CARSON UNION —Question, Mr. Woodall; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1327

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—FORCIBLE RE-ENTRY AFTER EVICTION—CASE OF T. OLWILL—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1328

SHIPWRECKS AND DISASTERS AT SEA—STATISTICS—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Mr. J. Holms 1328

POOR LAW—TRANSFER OF PAUPERS TO IRELAND—CASE OF WILLIAM DAVIS —Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1329

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India—Petroleum Act, 1871—The Burning of the "Aurora"—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. J. Holms 1357
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South Africa—The Chief Mankoroane—Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1359
Egypt (Re-organization of the Civil Service)—Native Employes—Questions, Lord Elcho, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1360
Poor Law (England and Wales)—Catholic Children in Nottingham Workhouse—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. George Russell 1360
Army—The Abolition of Purchase—The Return—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1362
Egypt (Events in the Soudan) — General Gordon — Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1362
Law and Justice—Arrangement of the Circuits—Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, The Attorney General 1364
Poor Law (England and Wales)—The Poland Street Workhouse—Questions, Sir Alexander Gordon, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Grantham, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. George Russell 1364
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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4)—

(In the Committee.

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) £10,000, Public Works Office, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1374

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(2.) £425, Chancery Division and Supreme Court Generally.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1396
(3.) £985, Central Office of the Supreme Court of Judicature.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1396
(4.) £9,916, County Courts.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1405
(5.) £5,100, Police—Counties and Boroughs (Great Britain).
(6.) £100, Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies.
(7.) £4,700, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1406
(8.) £730, Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1408
(9.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £15,090, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, of Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 & 16 Vic. c. 83" 1410
After long debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 129, Noes 18; Majority 111.—(Div. List, No. 37.)
(10.) £1,194, Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1474
(11.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,654, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission" 1474
After debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Sexton:*)—After further debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Original Question again proposed 1496
After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*
(12.) £18,000, Dublin Metropolitan Police.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1497
(13.) £2,110, Prisons, Ireland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1499

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(14.) £335, London University.
(15.) £2,000, South Wales University College.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(16.) £1,000, Consular Services.
(17.) £5,485, Suppression of the Slave Trade.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1500
(18.) £1,207, Tonnage Bounties, &c. and Liberated African Department.
(19.) £8,000, Subsidy to Castle Mail Packets Company.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1501

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(20.) £4,200, Superannuations and Retired Allowances.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1501

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(21.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,020, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances" .. 1502

Supply—Civil Services, &c., Estimates—Committee—*continued.*

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Warton* :)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1504

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,561 10*s.* 8*d.*, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere* :)—After debate, Question put :—The Committee *divided ;* Ayes 26, Noes 45 ; Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 38.)

Original Question again proposed 1513

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £102,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Expenses of the Post Office Service" 1514

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Biggar* :)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Civil Service Excesses.

(22.) £1,526 14*s.* 10*d.*, Civil Service Excesses.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow ;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Hyde Park Corner Improvements Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Courtney*) ; *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 136] 1514

[3.45.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 14.

Greek Marriages Bill (No. 26)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 1515

After short debate, Motion *agreed to :*—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

Law and Justice—The Office of Public Executioner—Question, Observations, Earl Cowper ; Reply, The Earl of Dalhousie 1516

Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Battle of Tamanieb—Results of the Defeat of Osman Digna—Question, Earl Beauchamp ; Answer, Earl Granville 1519

[5.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 14.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Parliament—Proceedings of Committees on Private Bills—Amendment of Standing Order No. 149—

Standing Order No. 149 read 1520

Amendment proposed,

After the word "them," to insert the words "Together with a Judgment on the case stating the reasons and facts upon which their decision is founded,"—(*Mr. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted :"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Metropolitan Railway (Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement) Bill—Instruction to the Committee—

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between Westminster and Charing Cross, either by means of a physical junction or by an interchange station,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) 1529

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METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (PARK RAILWAY AND PARLIAMENT STREET IMPROVEMENT) BILL—*continued.*

After short debate, Question, "That the word 'Westminster' stand part of the proposed Instruction," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'St. James' Park Station' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, after the words "Charing Cross," to leave out the word "either," and insert after the words "physical junction," the words "if practicable,"—(*Major Dickson:*)—Amendment *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between St. James' Park Station and Charing Cross, by means of a physical junction, if practicable, or by an interchange station.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to inquire to what extent the present block of traffic at Albert Gate will be affected by the proposed station there, and to make such recommendations as they may deem necessary,—(*Mr. Cubitt.*)

QUESTIONS.

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—THE TENANTRY NEAR GWEEDORE—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1532

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACTING MAIL GUARDS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1534

IRELAND—THE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD—THE STAFF—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1534

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—STOPPAGES—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1534

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—POLICE HUTS IN COUNTY CLARE—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1536

ARMY—THE NORMAL MILITARY SCHOOL—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1536

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—ANTRIM ARTILLERY—MAJOR JOHNSTON—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1537

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—CASES LISTED AT NAVAN—Question, Mr. Sheil; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1537

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PARTY PROCESSIONS—OMAGH PETTY SESSIONS CLERK—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1538

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CORONERS' EXPENSES—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1539

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—COMPULSORY SLAUGHTER—IRISH PRIVY COUNCIL ORDERS—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1539

WEST INDIES (JAMAICA)—FOOD TAXES—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1540

MALTA—FOOD TAXES—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1540

ARMY (INDIA)—MAJOR HUTCHINSON—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1541

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS—CASE OF WILLIAM HAYWARD—Questions, Viscount Lewisham, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella 1542

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA OFFICERS—STATISTICS—Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1542

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POLAND STREET WORKHOUSE INQUIRY—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. George Russell .. 1543

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PATRONAGE)—OFFICIAL RECEIVERS—Question, Viscount Folkestone; Answer, The Attorney General 1543

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE—INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL GRAHAM—Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1544

ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT—REGIMENTAL PAYMASTERS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1545

LAW AND JUSTICE—ETIQUETTE OF THE BAR—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Warton; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Attorney General.. .. 1546

CATTLE IMPORTATION—LOSSES OF CATTLE AT SEA—Question, Mr. Duckham; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1546

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL—Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1547

PARLIAMENT—SELECT COMMITTEES—DISCLOSURE OF PROCEEDINGS—Personal Explanation, Mr. Onslow; Reply, Mr. Speaker 1548

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDERS OF THE DAY—Observations, The Marquess of Hartington:—Short debate thereon .. 1550

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House adheres to the Resolution of March 22nd 1872, that the system of Private Bill Legislation calls for the attention of Parliament and of Her Majesty's Government, and requires reform; that this House, while maintaining the ultimate control of Parliament over Private Bill Legislation, is of opinion that a Tribunal, to take the place of Private Bill Committees, should be created which should investigate the facts and deal with the evidence relating to Private Bills, and, so far as possible, in the locality affected by such Bills, whether in England, or in Scotland, or in Ireland, and report thereon to Parliament,"—(*Mr. Craig-Sellar,*)—instead thereof 1554

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—ABERYSTWITH COLLEGE—Observations, Mr. Rendel 1589

After debate, Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—AFGHAN WAR (GRANT IN AID)—SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1883-4—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £500,000, Afghan War (Grant in Aid).—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1632

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4)—

(2.) £102,000, Post Office.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1634

(3.) £18,000, Post Office Packet Service.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1645

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [13th March] *reported* 1647

First Resolution:—After short debate, Resolution *agreed to.*
The next Four Resolutions *agreed to.*
Sixth Resolution:—After short debate, Resolution *agreed to,*
The next five Resolutions *agreed to,*

SUPPLY—REPORT—*continued.*

Twelfth Resolution:—Motion made, and Question, "That the Resolution be postponed,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be considered upon *Monday* next.

Land Drainage Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 137] 1651

[2.5.]

COMMONS, SATURDAY, MARCH 15.

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Raikes; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Thomas Brassey.. 1651

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

EGYPT (EASTERN SOUDAN)—MILITARY OPERATIONS—Observations, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett 1653

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is of opinion that the necessity for the great loss of British and Arab life, occasioned by our Military operations in the Eastern Soudan, has not been made apparent,"—(*Mr. Labouchere,*)—instead thereof 1662

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 111, Noes 94; Majority 17.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN PLUNKETT, CORK DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE—Observations, Mr. O'Brien; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan:—Debate thereon 1729

Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 57, Noes 15; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 40.) [10.20 B.M.]

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4)—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £27,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad" 1767

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £26,850, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Kenny*) 1772

After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 11, Noes 71; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 41.) [11.10 B.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £155, Suez Canal (British Directors).—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1776

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4)—*continued.*

(3.) £13,700, Supplementary sum, Colonies, Grants in Aid.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1779

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £11,327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, and the Island of St. Helena" 1785

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor* :)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

After further short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin" .. 1804

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Biggar* :)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1809

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. O'Brien* :)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1856

After short debate, Original Question put:—The Committee *divided ;* Ayes 59, Noes 7; Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 42.) [5.35 A.M.]

After short debate, Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

[House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock on Sunday morning.]

LORDS.

NEW PEER.

Tuesday, March 11.

Alfred Tennyson, esquire, created Baron Tennyson of Aldworth in the county of Sussex and of Freshwater in the Isle of Wight.

SAT FIRST.

Monday, March 10.

The Lord Congleton, after the death of his brother.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

Tuesday, March 4.

For *Cambridgeshire, v.* the Right honble. Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., now Viscount Hampden, called up to the House of Peers.

Thursday, March 13.

For *Huntingdon Borough, v.* Viscount Hinchingbrook, now Earl of Sandwich, called up to the House of Peers.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Friday, February 29.

Lincoln County (*Southern Division*)—Hon. Murray Edward Gordon Finch-Hatton.
City of Cork— John Deasy, esquire.

Monday, March 3.

Brighton—William Thackeray Marriott, esquire.

Wednesday, March 5.

Meath County—William Meagher, esquire.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Fifth Session of the *Twenty-Second Parliament* of the
United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 29 April, 1880, in the Forty-third
Year of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 26*th February*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Committee*—Matrimonial Causes * (8-20).
Committee — Report — Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) * (18).
Report—Law of Evidence Amendment * (9).
Third Reading—Contagious Diseases (Animals)* (17), and *passed*.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES —THE QUEEN'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

The LORD STEWARD of the HOUSEHOLD (The Earl Sydney) reported the Queen's Answer to the Address of Friday last as follows:—

I have received your Address praying that a Royal Commission may be appointed to inquire into the housing of the working classes:

I have sincere satisfaction in giving directions that a Commission shall issue for that purpose, in the earnest hope that this inquiry may lead to an improvement in the condition of the poorest and most suffering classes of My subjects.

DYNAMITE OUTRAGES—THE EXPLOSION AT VICTORIA STATION.

QUESTION.

The Earl of LIMERICK said, he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they could give the House any information with regard to the explosion that morning at Victoria Station, which had caused so much alarm in the Metropolis? He believed there was a very strong feeling that that was another of that class of outrages which had taken place on previous occasions.

Earl GRANVILLE, in reply, said, he would have been glad to answer the Question, though without previous Notice; but he was not sufficiently informed to be able to give any reply to the Question at the present moment.

INDIA (CIVIL SERVICE).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

VISCOUNT ENFIELD, in rising to move—

"Than an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies or extracts of any correspondence that has passed since 1881 between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in Council as to 'constitutional robustness' in the case of candidates selected for the Covenanted Civil Service of India,"

said, that these appointments were, as their Lordships knew, thrown open to public competition, and young men with intellectual and scholarlike qualities came forward as candidates. The examinations were of a very searching character, and brought out in a very marked manner the intellectual and scholarlike qualities of the candidates. In addition to the first examination, candidates were also subjected to a medical examination, and, having passed that, spent some time at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, or Dublin, receiving during that time an allowance of £150 per annum from the India Office. At the end of that period they were again subjected to a medical examination, which, he believed, was conducted in a very searching manner by distinguished medical gentlemen. He need not dilate upon the fact that candidates, in addition to being qualified intellectually, should also be fit to do their duty with physical vigour; and after four years' experience on the Civil Service Commission he could say that the examinations were conducted in such a way as to secure, as far as possible, both those objects. But during the course of the year 1881, the Government of Bombay sent a despatch home, complaining of the character of some of the candidates, not from a moral or intellectual point of view, but saying that their physique was not such as to make them useful public servants. The ages within which candidates were formally admitted were 17 to 21; but they were altered by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), when he was Secretary of State for India, from 17 to 19. Some persons thought that had been an unfortunate restriction. Inquiries had been addressed to the different Governments of India, as to whether the complaints preferred by the Government of Bombay were also entertained by other Governments. He was anxious to find out whether that change of age had been fatal to the physical requirements of the candidates, and in consequence of what had been stated, and because the Civil Service Commission were anxious to show what had been done, he now moved for this Correspondence.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in seconding the Motion, asked whether the Government would produce the medical certificates down to the present date, for according to some professional authorities the Civil Service Commissioners were the cause of more over-pressure than the elementary schools? He agreed entirely with what the noble Lord who had just sat down had said against the reduction of the maximum age for competition for Indian candidates to 19. The Indian newspapers were full of complaints against the injustice of this with regard to Natives of India, who were obliged to learn English first, before entering upon the study of other subjects of competition; but this early age was equally bad for English candidates, and prevented their going to the Universities. A few years ago their Lordships had seen a Blue Book on the competitive examination system in India. Officials who had entered the service by this means had been invited to give their opinions upon it. Now, the great vice of the Indian Administration was the prolixity of all their writings, and incapacity for conciseness. On this occasion the competition officials looked upon it as a godsend to be called upon to write essays to be printed at the public expense; and all their Reports were of immeasurable length. He thought that his noble Friend the Chief of the Civil Service Commission had rather neglected a duty by not teaching and inculcating greater brevity.

Moved for—

"An Address for copies or extracts of any correspondence that has passed since 1881 between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in Council as to 'constitutional robustness' in the case of candidates selected for the Covenanted Civil Service of India."—(*The Viscount Enfield.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, there would be no difficulty in laying the Correspondence and extracts from the Papers for which his noble Friend (Viscount Enfield) had moved; and he would only so far anticipate the publication of them by saying what it might be satisfactory to their Lordships to know, that, although the Government of Bombay made some complaints as to the "constitutional robustness" of the Civil Servants of that Presidency, the Reports from other Presidencies did not confirm those complaints. Reference had been made by his noble Friend to the limits of age made by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury); but he (the Earl of Kimberley) might point out that there was no Motion before the House upon which a discussion on that point could be raised, as his noble Friend simply moved for Papers, and he (the Earl of Kimberley) did not think it would be convenient to enter into a general discussion as to the rules laid down. His noble Friend would see, from the Papers asked for, when published, that the different Governments in India who had been consulted reported that up to the present time there had been no diminution in the "constitutional robustness" of the Civil Servants there; but they added, very fairly, that the time since the alteration had been inadequate to judge of results. He quite agreed that Indian Minutes were very voluminous, and it would be a valuable thing if the candidates could be taught to express themselves in a more concise form.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he quite agreed with the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India that the present was not a fitting opportunity for discussing a subject with reference to which separate Notice ought to be given. He hoped that the terms of the Motion might be enlarged, so that they might be taken by the noble Earl opposite as including the case of civil engineers coming from Cooper's Hill College. There could be no doubt the complaint referred to in the Motion was an error that ought to be at once dissipated.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that he did not think there was any Correspondence to produce about the engineers to whom the noble Marquess referred. He would, however, make inquiries.

Motion *agreed to.*

BULGARIA—ROUSTCHOUK-VARNA RAILWAY.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

EARL DE LA WARR, in rising to move for Papers and correspondence relative to the Roustchouk-Varna Railway; and to ask Her Majesty's Government, What steps have been taken to comply with Article X. of the Treaty of Berlin? said, that he wished to call the attention of the Government to the position of the Roustchouk-Varna Railway Company, with reference to their claim upon the Government of the Principality of Bulgaria. He had no personal interest in the question, neither was he in possession of any information which was not available to any of their Lordships; but it seemed to him to be a question which required notice on the part of the Government; and, indeed, he thought a rather vigorous course should be taken by the Government. The facts were briefly these. Some 20 years ago a concession was granted by the Ottoman Government, and it was afterwards taken over by an English Company, who found the capital, and the railway in question was made, being completed in 1867. Up to the time of the Treaty of Berlin the Turkish Government were responsible for the subvention which had been guaranteed in the concession for 99 years, and which for the first 33 years was to be £140,000. It appeared, however, that nothing had been paid since the year 1874. But by the Treaty of Berlin, signed nearly six years ago—in 1878—the new Principality of Bulgaria took over the obligations of the Ottoman Government towards the Varna Railway Company, under the 10th Article of that Treaty, and now owed to the Company £700,000 or upwards. The subject had more than once been under notice in their Lordships' House, and also in the House of Commons. On one occasion, nearly a year ago, the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said—

> "It is not a subject on which Her Majesty's Government have shown any negligence in pressing what I believe to be a just claim."—(3 *Hansard*, [279] 1477.)

A somewhat similar statement was made in the House of Commons. But he was informed that nothing had been done by the Bulgarian Government beyond making an offer of a compromise which it was impossible to accept. He was quite aware that the Government, at the present moment, had much to engage their serious attention; but, considering the length of time which had elapsed, he thought the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would agree with him that something now ought to be done, and some pressure put upon the Bulgarian Government, in order to make them fulfil their obligations with regard to a matter which involved the interests of a large number of British subjects. He begged to move the Motion that stood in his name upon the Paper.

Moved for, "An Address for Papers and correspondence relative to the Roustchouk-Varna Railway."—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: I shall be quite willing to agree to the Motion of the noble Earl opposite (Earl De La Warr) for Papers. They will show the steps which have been taken, up to the present time, by the Government, in order to carry into effect the 10th Article of the Treaty of Berlin. At this moment the action of the Government is suspended, while direct negotiations are going on between the Bulgarian Government and the Railway Company. Their action, however, will only be suspended while those negotiations are in progress.

Motion *agreed to.*

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN).

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, in rising to call attention to the reported order to General Graham to advance from Trinkitat; and to ask Her Majesty's Government, What policy they intend to pursue in that portion of the Soudan, said, that in consequence of the report that reached this country yesterday to the effect that General Graham had received orders to advance, he had been in hopes that a Question on that subject would have been put the day before by the Leader of the Opposition, but an accident had caused the absence of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury); and it was only on the spur of the moment, at the rising of the House, that he (the Earl of Wemyss) ventured to give the Notice which was on the Paper. At the same time, he proposed showing that the Expeditionary Force was ill-equipped with horses and Artillery, and imperfectly supplied with commissariat and means of transport, and therefore unable to undertake any considerable or lengthened operations. Knowing this, it was desirable that they should know exactly what the order was that had been given to him. Tokar no longer awaited relief, for its garrison had gone over to Osman Digna. It was, therefore, hardly a sufficient reason for the advance of General Graham's force that the unhappy soldiers who had fallen in the war still awaited burial. Perhaps the reason of the advance was that the Government hoped, by a successful engagement with Osman Digna, to restore our prestige, which had suffered so greatly of late. The only reason that appeared now to remain for his expedition was, that Her Majesty's Government had in the earlier part of these events been dilatory and negative, and that now they were over-active and rather inclined to be rash than otherwise. If it were not for what had occurred the previous night in "another place," when it was stated by the Prime Minister and the Marquess of Hartington that their policy was clear and distinct—that it was to defend Suakim and the borders of the Red Sea; that they had given a discretion to General Graham in carrying out that policy; and that it would be injurious to the Empire if the Government were pressed at that time to state more fully what their plans were, he should have pressed the Government to declare distinctly and definitely what their policy was in that part of the world. But, though not pressing for that information, he did ask for a distinct assurance on the part of the Government that, whatever their policy and intentions might be, they would not shelter themselves behind the discretionary powers they had given to General Graham. He trusted that it was clear in their own minds what General Graham's duty was, and that that duty having been clearly defined, they would give him everything that, was requisite and necessary to enable him to give full effect to the policy and intentions of the Government. In conclusion he would express an earnest wish that General Graham might be successful, and that we might not have to deplore another disaster like those which marked the path of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt like milestones.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, that, in his opinion, it was fitting that Her

Majesty's Government should also give some information as to the state of insubordination reported to have existed for the last 48 hours amongst the Egyptian coloured troops at Suakin.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, that he had only returned from the East within the last 48 hours, and he wished to protest against the ill-advised words which were frequently used in this country, such as had fallen from the noble Earl (the Earl of Wemyss) about an ill-armed and ill-equipped force being sent to the Soudan. Some 10 days ago he was in Cettinge, and he could assure their Lordships that the fall of Sinkat was known there as soon as it was in London. In fact, there was no part of Europe and Northern Africa where it was not equally so. That noble Lords should have expressed their opinions so freely as to the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government was creating the greatest mischief in the Mussulman world. We had no idea in this country how the opinions of politicians in this country were discussed abroad. He saw the Governor of one part of Albania when the news of a recent disaster arrived, and so excited were the people that the Constantinople Government sent an order to all Englishmen to leave the country at once. The feeling on the subject was intensified by the telegraphic news which came from this country as to the expression of opinion here. Noble Lords were only hampering the Government, and were doing no good whatever to their country, when they talked of ill-armed and ill-equipped forces. He did not believe the Mussulmans themselves thought the Mahdi's force was going to become a great power; but his importance was increased in the minds of Mussulmans by English politicians speaking in that way. They were simply making a mountain out of a molehill by investing him with such unwarranted importance. If they would but stop the *cacoëthes loquendi*, which at present troubled the people of this country, and trust the assurances given by Her Majesty's Government as to the course they were determined to pursue, they would act much more wisely, and a great deal of possible mischief might be averted. No stronger assurances could be given than had been given by Mr. Gladstone and the Marquess of Hartington in "another place," that they would carry out a firm policy. Those assurances were, or ought to be, enough to satisfy any reasonable person, and he would entreat noble Lords not to pursue a course which could only hamper Her Majesty's Government, and not to give utterance to insinuations which would be telegraphed abroad and would do mischief.

LORD LAMINGTON said, he should be glad if the Government would take that opportunity of clearly defining what was the position of the Government in the Soudan; and whether the Sultan had been consulted on the steps that had been taken.

EARL GRANVILLE: I am glad to hear from the noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) that it was only on the impulse of the moment he gave Notice of the Question which he put on the Paper last night. My noble Friend, though not a soldier, has yet, in a manner most creditable to him, paid considerable attention to military matters; and I should have thought that that attention would have been sufficient to have told him that it is not desirable to ask the Government for details of military operations still going on. I am glad that he has not put any particular Question after what occurred last night. Had he done so, I should have felt it my duty not to take upon myself the responsibility of deviating from the course which my Colleagues have taken in "another place," with the full concurrence of the Conservative Party, and have stated distinctly that it would be premature to enter on any discussion of these military matters. The noble Earl has expressed a hope that we shall not hide our responsibility behind General Graham. There is no question of hiding our responsibility. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) has stated in "another place," in answer to certain Questions, that, while he has given General Graham decided instructions as to what he may do, and what he may not do, he has yet given him a large discretion in regard to the particular object we have in view. I cannot conceive anything wiser than that; nor can I conceive that the noble Earl meant that we, in this country, were to dictate to General Graham, who, with his knowledge of the locality, is in a far better position than we are to say what it is best to do.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I have to apologize to my noble Friend on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) for not asking the Question which stood on the Paper in my name last evening. I concur with him that it is not desirable to repeat it now, for the reasons he has given, and those advanced by the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But I cannot concur with the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly) in the observations he has made. We are too much interested in the course of events at this juncture to be called upon to listen to a lecture against the *cacoëthes loquendi.* But I would point out to the noble Marquess that we are between two fires. We are in this difficulty. If we, the Opposition, take notice of public events, and express our opinion upon them, we are subject to the censure of the noble Marquess himself; but if we do not take notice of them, as in the case of the Soudan last year, because we think the time not suitable, we come under the severe censure of the Marquess of Hartington in "another place," who will lose no opportunity to point out that we share the responsibility of the Government, because we did not condemn them at the moment. I do not see how we are to escape from that position. The truth is that, though unwilling to discuss the military matter, I cannot admit the truth of what the noble Marquess has said—that the cause of our troubles and disasters in Egypt has been due to our criticism of Her Majesty's Government. My opinion is, that the disasters which have occurred are, in the main, due to the want of ordinary prudence and foresight on the part of the Government, and are more likely to have effect on the mind of the Mussulmans than any comments of Parliament when telegraphed out; and, therefore, the warning of the noble Lord on the Cross Benches did not go beyond the line of strict prudence, looking at what we have recently witnessed. As to the warnings given by the noble Marquess, I do not think they need to be addressed to us. We have really cause to warn Her Majesty's Government against that frugal optimism which has already brought so much discredit and difficulty on our policy, and so much dishonour—if not upon our own arms, upon the arms of an Ally so closely related to us and so much in our hands that what touches his honour reflects upon ours. We hope that Her Majesty's Government will not maintain that exceedingly cheerful estimate of affairs which induced them to imagine that General Hicks was perfectly safe and quite certain to succeed when General Hicks and Sir Edward Malet were telling them to the contrary——

EARL GRANVILLE: Did Her Majesty's Government ever express any opinion of that kind on the subject?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Well, if Her Majesty's Government did not believe that General Hicks was safe, their guilt and their responsibility exceeds anything I could have imagined, because then, by their omission, they deliberately consigned to a cruel death an officer who was one of Her Majesty's subjects, and the troops of our own Ally under his command, and brought about these wars which had plunged them into all the disasters and perplexities that have occurred. Up to the present, we have not ventured to assume that they knew that General Hicks was going on a grave and desperate enterprize.

EARL GRANVILLE: I really must interrupt the noble Marquess. When the noble Marquess accuses the conduct of Her Majesty's Government, let him confine himself to something they have said, and not assume that they said one thing now and then another.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I shall certainly assume that they said first one thing and then another, because it is what they invariably do. I think, if the noble Earl will review his own speeches and those of his Colleagues, he will find that during the late debates they said that Her Majesty's Government had no reason to believe that General Hicks's expedition would meet with the fate that it did, or that General Baker's expedition would meet with the fate which befell it. That was the very kernel of their defence. They followed the movements of those two officers with an uncalculating optimism; they declined to look facts in the face, or believe the reports received from their own trusted agents; and the result was—I will give it no harsher name—the slaughter of gallant men and the terrible disasters, resulting in the massacre of women and children, which startled and appalled this country. I think, then, we have the right to warn the Government against a repetition of the sanguine and careless policy they have pursued, against such fallacious estimates, and such feeble preparations. I do not know what they now intend to do—I do not know what policy they are pursuing; but if any expedition is to be undertaken on the Red Sea by the forces we have, for Heaven's sake let the force itself be adequate in number and fully armed and equipped. Let it be able to do what it would no doubt wish to do—its duty as British officers and British soldiers. I do not wish to press Her Majesty's Government to give any explanation that may be unnecessary from their point of view. I rise rather to reply to the censure addressed to my noble Friend on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss); but I cannot conclude without saying how grave I feel in this juncture. The mistake in the policy of Her Majesty's Government, from beginning to end, is that they have underrated the force of Mussulman sentiment and the danger of Mussulman fanaticism, and that they have not taken the proper and obvious course of avoiding that danger. And now, in the surrender of Tokar, and the preference of Egyptians rather to yield to a nominal enemy, the Mussulman, rather than receive the succour of nominal friends, the Christians, we only see a more emphatic testimony to the gravity and depth of those far worse dangers than any that have hitherto presented themselves, which are visible to every Continental critic and every Continental Power, and which have led, and may yet lead, Her Majesty's Government to further disaster and disgrace.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), throughout the observations he has made, has raised the question whether Her Majesty's Government are as responsible for the expedition of General Hicks as it is for the expedition of General Graham. The noble Marquess places the two expeditions on the same ground. Now, I admit, of course, that it is an arguable matter, whether or not the Government ought to have interfered to prevent the expedition of Hicks Pasha. Noble Lords on that side entertain one opinion, and we another; but, at all events, we determined that we would not be responsible for it. Although the noble Marquess has attempted to throw a certain amount of discredit on the Government in connection with the expedition of Hicks Pasha, I would point out that that is a very different case to the responsibility which was undoubtedly incurred when a British expedition, composed of British soldiers, was despatched by the Government to Suakin. To assume that because the Egyptian Government had not made preparations, and that that want of preparation ended in the defeat of Hicks Pasha, therefore Her Majesty's Government are to be warned that they are not to be so careless with regard to the British expedition, is as audacious an attempt to prejudice the operations of the Government and to disparage their policy as ever I have heard in this House. Let us, at all events, so far as may be, limit the discussion to the real facts of the case, which, I admit, are sufficiently grave. We have determined to maintain our policy of defending the ports in the Red Sea, and we have taken measures in that direction. Of course, I cannot state the particular course which the General on the spot will take. He is responsible in the matter, and there is no doubt that he will discharge the duties entrusted to him admirably. The noble Marquess cannot diminish the difficulty of the position by the attacks he has made; and I am perfectly free to admit, at the same time, that we should not escape from our responsibility, or in any way seek to diminish the gravity of the situation. We are perfectly well aware of the position we hold in Egypt, and we know that the general feeling of the Mussulman world must necessarily be affected by what has taken place—we are quite aware of the responsibility which falls upon us, and all I can say is that I hope we shall discharge that responsibility in a manner satisfactory to Parliament and to the country.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, that the Government maintained that they were not responsible for the expeditions of General Hicks and Baker Pasha; but he (the Earl of Dunraven) did not think it was easy for them to disclaim that responsibility, for they must have known all the circumstances of the case, and they were responsible to the extent that they permitted the expeditions to go forward. He was speaking from memory, but his own impression was that Her Majesty's Government had stated that they had no good reason to suppose that General Baker and Hicks Pasha would not be successful.

EARL GRANVILLE: The words used by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) were that the Government were quite certain of success.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, Her Majesty's Government were masters of the country, and it certainly was their duty to take every reasonable precaution to ensure success. It had been stated for the last week or more, and there could be no doubt whatever of the fact, that the British Force at Suakin was badly equipped, and that it was wholly without Artillery, and badly off for transport and hospital arrangements.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: On what authority does the noble Earl say that?

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he had seen such statements in the newspapers; and, if they were not true, he hoped the Government would distinctly contradict them. If it was properly equipped, and the men had their horses and the Artillery their guns, and the transport and hospital arrangements were efficient, he should be only too glad to have the assurance of Her Majesty's Government on that point. He did not desire to ask the Government for the instructions given to the General in the field. That would be a very imprudent course; but the Government, he thought, should give some answer to the Question of his noble Friend (the Earl of Wemyss), and furnish some indication as to what policy they intended to pursue in the Soudan, because at present matters were so complicated that they did not know whether they were at war at all, or who they were at war with. He wished to know what enemy we were fighting now—whether we were fighting the Mahdi in one place and making terms with him in another, and what steps were being taken as regarded the Suzerainty of the Porte?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was compelled to protest, in the strongest possible way, against the idea that the Government must be held responsible for what appeared in every newspaper report. Every night noble Lords on the Cross Benches attacked the Government with reference to certain reports as to the bad condition of the force; but they possessed no evidence in support of those attacks. So far as he (the Earl of Morley) was concerned, he entirely denied the accuracy of those reports. The force had been sent out in a rapid way, and everything had been done to give it the equipment and transport necessary for the limited operations which it would have to undertake. By limited operations he meant, of course, that it was not intended that the force should make a long expedition into the deserts. He believed that, as far as it was possible, the force up to the present time had been properly equipped; and when the noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) complained of the absence of guns, he might say that he had given the noble Earl every answer he had required. He had stated that there were 10 camel guns with the force, and he had given reasons why it was not thought desirable to have others sent. It was not necessary that he should repeat the information which he gave their Lordships on a former occasion. He thought it was not fair that the Government should have to come down to the House every day to answer questions founded upon statements in the newspapers as to the condition of the force.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE said, he did not think that the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Morley) should attempt to shelter the Government from the charges which had been made by throwing doubt on the accuracy of newspaper Correspondents. He (the Earl of Hardwicke) doubted whether, throughout these transactions, the accounts sent to this country by the newspaper Correspondents had been far wrong. He would leave their Lordships to judge whether they had been wrongfully or rightly assailed; but, for his own part, he thought the country was much indebted to them, for if it had not been for the information which they sent home the people would have been kept considerably in the dark as to the general management by the Government of their proceedings in Egypt. For 18 months everything the Government had done had turned out a failure, and the present failure seemed likely to come in a severer form than they anticipated. It was no use for the Government to endeavour to check the natural feelings of the people, and of the Members of their Lordships' House, who had a right to know, in a very decided manner, what the Government intended to do. Many of their Lordships felt that they did not receive that just and due consideration at the hands of the Government which they ought to receive. When they asked grave questions they were put off with such "blarney" as "Are you going to believe what is said in the newspapers?" That was not the way in which they were treated with regard to another matter, when certain Members of the present Government were in the habit of "bullyragging" the late Conservative Ministry. This House was strongly representative of the feelings of the people, and their Lordships ought to express clearly to the Government the things they daily heard. The Members of the Government seemed to live in a fool's paradise; but they might rest assured that the cohesion of their great majority in the other House would not save them from the certain punishment that would await them if any disaster happened to General Graham.

EARL GRANVILLE moved, "That this House do now adjourn."

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 26*th February,* 1884.

ELECTION OF A SPEAKER.

The House met at Four o'clock precisely, to proceed to the Election of a Speaker.

At Four o'clock, accordingly, the SERJEANT entered the House, and brought the Mace, and laid it on the Table.

Then the RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, addressing himself to the Clerk (who, standing up, pointed to him, and then sat down) said: Sir Thomas Erskine May, I have it in command from Her Majesty to acquaint this House, that having been informed of the resignation of the Right honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of this House, she gives leave to the House to proceed forthwith to the choice of a new Speaker.

MR. WHITBREAD then stood up, and addressing himself in like manner to the Clerk, said: Sir Thomas Erskine May, the kindness and indulgence of others has committed to me a task as agreeable as it is honourable; but which, perhaps, by strict custom and on the ground of fitness, might have been more properly given to some other Member. Sir, I desire to move that my hon. Friend, Mr. Arthur Wellesley Peel, do take the Chair of this House as Speaker. Sir, on this occasion I am precluded by almost unbroken custom from referring at all either to the character or to the services of the late Speaker; but, perhaps, this one sentence may be permitted to me—that the feeling of the loss which the House has sustained in the retirement of the Speaker, who, for 12 years, has exercised the authority of the Chair, makes me only the more deeply sensible of the grave responsibility which rests upon the House in the choice of his Successor. And now, Sir, for one moment I should like to advert to the only objection that I have heard raised anywhere to the selection of the hon. Member whom I desire to propose. I do not expect that that objection will be raised in this House, and I trust the House will pardon me for referring to it. It is that for some time my hon. Friend held Office in the Government. Now, if this should occur to the mind of anyone as an objection, I should like to say that it has not been held so in this House. Speaking upon the election of a Speaker, who is still living, and in the memory of some few who are still Members of this House, Mr. Wynn said, in the year 1839, that he desired to remind the House that four preceding Speakers had held Office before their election—Sir John Mitford, who was Attorney General; Mr. Abbott, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland; Mr. Manners Sutton, who was Judge Advocate General; and Mr. Abercromby, who was elected after being a Member of the King's Cabinet. Mr. Wynn justly remarked that, with those precedents before the House, if any complaint had arisen, it surely would have been noticed and commented upon, and continued—

> "Instead of that, we have been called upon on every occasion to do justice to the fairness and impartiality of the successive occupiers of the Chair."—(3 *Hansard*, [47] 1043.)

Indeed, Sir, having discharged the duties of Office with credit is a guarantee, at all events, of the ability of the holder of that Office; and, on the other hand, we should remember that strong Party feelings are not confined to the occupiers of the Treasury Bench alone. It seems to me that the question we have to ask ourselves is, not whether my hon. Friend has at one time or other in his life held Office, but whether we can regard him as a man possessed of that fair mind and impartial judgment necessary to fit him for the high Office of Speaker. It is well, no doubt, that our choice should rest on someone who has been, not too lately, engaged in those Party strifes which are the lot of the occupiers of the Treasury Bench, upon someone who has had some short time, as it were, to shake off the dust of the arena of Party conflict. I go even further than this, and, as far as my own judgment goes, I have no doubt that if, in search of the qualities that go to make an efficient Speaker, we should be led to one now holding Office, I do not think that that fact should bar us from the selection of the fittest man. Indeed, the importance of the Office is too great to allow us to narrow our choice in that way. Well, Sir, it is well that, for some reasons, the choice of a Speaker has to be made, not at the commencement of a new Parliament, when there is a large influx of hon. Members unacquainted with the Rules and Proceedings of this House, but at a time like the present, when they are familiar to the whole body of Members; and this very consideration makes it unnecessary for me to dwell at any great length upon the varied qualities and gifts which we must seek in a Speaker. He, indeed, will have been a poor observer of this House who has not seen what a vast influence the character of the Speaker exercises over our proceedings, and who has not realized how essential it is for us to appoint a Gentleman of high character and unstained reputation. The whole House has recognized the tact, the patience, and the firmness that are required in that Office—the strict impartiality and the cool judgment at a time when the minds of all men around are stirred in Party debate. Sir, the increasing strain of Parliamentary life, which we all feel, is intensified in the occupier of the Chair. I do not refer only to the physical and mental endurance that are required to keep vigilant watch over our long debates; but no one who has been long in the House can have failed to observe how the practice has been rapidly growing of late years of raising points of Order and pressing for the decision of the Chair repeatedly, night after night, and almost hour after hour. At such times the Speaker has to act alone. We do not always think enough of that; but, isolated as he is, he has to act alone, without the opportunity of one moment's consultation with Friends around him; and we must, therefore, look for great self-reliance in him. We, of the majority, are entitled to look to the Speaker to see that the Rules and Orders and the practice which govern our debates are not set aside or abused; but that this House, with due observance of them, both in the spirit and in the letter, is able to discharge its high functions both as a deliberative and a legislative Assembly; and, on the other hand, in the Speaker, the minority, however small, should find their friend and best protector in the just exercise of their rights. To him the House at large is accustomed to look to maintain its dignity and its honour, and to maintain also its great privileges. It was well said last night, by the Prime Minister, that this Office has no counterpart in any other Assembly; and as the Office is singular in its duties, so it is in the source from whence its authority is derived. No Resolutions inscribed on our Journals, no Standing Orders, no powers by statute will, for one moment, avail a Speaker who has lost the confidence of this House. His whole authority is based upon that confidence. It is a confidence which the greatest and freest Assembly in the world has been delighted to repose in its Speaker; and as it has been in the past, so I trust it will be in the future; and if, as some think, troublous times are in store for us in Parliament, I feel confident that the great body of the House will renew, from day to day, their confidence in the Speaker, and that the measure of that confidence will only be the need that can arise for it. Although this Office is singular, and the authority which is conferred upon the Chair is singular, it is happily true that our Parliamentary life seems to train up and fit men to discharge the high duties of the Chair. I believe that the qualities I have sketched are largely held and possessed by my hon. Friend (Mr. Peel). I might have attributed them to him one by one; but his presence on this occasion would have made it difficult for me to say all that I might have said. But this much, I think, I may truly say, that although my hon. Friend has not been eager to thrust himself on the attention and the notice of this House, yet those who have come nearest to him, who have known him best, and have had the greatest opportunity of watching him, whether in his official capacity, or acting as a private Member of this House, are those who have the greatest and strongest confidence in his success should he be called to the Chair. Long private friendship and deep respect for him would induce me to add more, if it were not that he sits near me now. I will content myself only with saying that if he is called to the Chair—as called to the Chair I hope he will be by the unanimous voice of this House—I hope that much, on the ground of the strength it undoubtedly lends to the position of the Speaker to be so called—then, I think, he will be able to uphold the dignity and honour of this House, and to maintain our Privileges intact from whatever quarter they may be assailed, and that he will show himself a worthy inheritor of a proud Parliamentary name, and an able Successor of the many illustrious men who have filled that Chair before him. I beg to move—"That Arthur Wellesley Peel, Esquire, do take the Chair of this House, as Speaker."

MR. RATHBONE: Sir Thomas Erskine May, I rise, with great pleasure, to second the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), though I need not assure the House that it is only in deference to judgment superior to my own that I have ventured to undertake to do so. However, I have the great advantage of following my hon. Friend. Our confidence in his knowledge of the Business, of the customs, and of the traditions of this House is so complete, that it would seem unnecessary for me to add anything to what he has said of the qualities required to fill the Chair of this House —the one great Office of State, justly described as that—

> "Which does not depend upon the nomination of the Crown, but proceeds entirely from the election of the people."

I need not, therefore, detain the House for more than a very few minutes. We shall all agree with what my hon. Friend has said in proposing that the hon. Member for Warwick (Mr. Arthur Peel) should be called to the Chair, which has been filled by the late Speaker with traditional firmness and courtesy, and with admirable tact and dignity. My hon. Friend has spoken of the increased strain to which the exigencies of the present day subject the Speaker. But beyond the causes for this which he enumerated, beyond the vastly increased work of domestic legislation, the discoveries of science have brought the most remote corners of our Indian and Colonial Empire—and, indeed, every part of the world where Englishmen and English interests are found—into instantaneous communication with the Government and with this House. Events happening in Tonquin, Lahore, Constantinople, Pretoria, or New Guinea, and the action or suggested action of the Government thereon, are inquired into and debated in this House within a few hours of their occurrence. Formerly they were dealt with without reference home, or debate here, by our Representatives on the spot, and were debated, if at all, as accomplished facts by a few leading men on both sides. Now, many Members of this House understand, or believe that they can with advantage discuss, the Colonial, Imperial, or foreign policy of the country, and are stimulated to do so by the interests and wishes of their constituents. A congestion of the Business of the House has, consequently, taken place, which is without precedent in the history of this country. And, at such a time, it is of the first importance that the Chair should be again filled by one whose imperturbable temper, calm judgment, and unfailing tact shall command from all sides the cheerful recognition of his authority; by one who will know how to confine our debates within legitimate limits, without interfering with that freedom of discussion which is necessary for the enlightenment of the people as to the management of their affairs; and for the sound decision of those weighty questions on which their welfare and the safety and honour of this Empire depend. This is an occasion on which this House will naturally wish to be guided by the experience and wisdom of those who have preceded us; and I find that the words of the father of the hon. Member for Warwick have been quoted on a similar occasion by one of his most distinguished political opponents as the most pregnant declaration of the qualities necessary to enable the Speaker to preside over the councils of this House with dignity, ability, and success. Sixty-five years ago the late Sir Robert Peel said of the Speaker—

> "Whatever may be his talents or attainments, I consider it absolutely necessary that he should possess the confidence of the House. That confidence no attainments can command, while we bow with ready deference to high integrity and lofty-minded independence."

I shall carry the House with me, if, still using the language of his illustrious father, I appeal to everyone who knows the hon. Member for Warwick—

> "Whether throughout his intercourse with mankind he has ever met with a man of higher honour, of more spotless integrity of character."

I will only add that it is the happy fortune of our country often to find the heritage of ability, statesmanship, and patriotism among its families. It will, therefore, be congenial alike to the historical traditions and to the feelings and interests of our political life that we should to-day find the man fitted to preside over and guide the deliberations of this, the first of Representative Assemblies in the world, in the son of an illustrious statesman, who, as Leader of the House, added to its glorious traditions, and attained the foremost place in the affections of the people and in the councils of the nation. Believing that, in the words of Lord John Russell—

> "He will so preserve order in this Assembly as to conciliate even those whom it may be his duty to reprove,"

I have the pleasure to second the proposal that the hon. Member for Warwick should be invited to become the Speaker of this House, a position once described by Lord Beaconsfield as—

> "The highest honour which English gentlemen can confer on one possessing their confidence and esteem."

Then MR. ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL, being unanimously called to the Chair, submitted himself to the House, saying: Sir Thomas Erskine May, the House will believe me when I say that it is with no ordinary weight and sense of responsibility that I rise to address it; and, first, I hope that I may be thus far permitted the indulgence of personal feeling as to thank my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), and my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), for the terms which they have used in reference to myself. Although I cannot appropriate to myself any of the expressions which they have used, I attribute them, however, to the generosity of their feelings, and to their personal friendship towards myself. Sir, I am under no illusion as to the presentation of my name to the House for the great Office of the Chair. I know very well that circumstances have favoured the presentation of my name; I know that there are many men—men among whom I am now speaking—men not only on this side, but on the other side of the House, whom the House might well have preferred to myself to fill the great Office of the Chair. But I know very well, Sir, how much I am indebted above all things—it would be unnatural in me if I did not avow it in the face of the House of Commons—I know how much I am indebted for the favour which the House has thus far shown me to the fact that I am the son of a statesman, whose history and whose labours are identified with the story and with the debates of this House; whose public services are indelibly written in the records of his country; and whose name is warmly cherished in a multitude of British homes. Sir, knowing all this, and feeling all this with an intensity which I can but imperfectly express to the House, I am all the more sensible of the weight of responsibility which attaches to me on those accounts. I know that, if the favour of the House shall elect me to that Chair, I have a great example before me in the case of the right hon. Gentleman who has just quitted that Office. That example will be useful to any Gentleman who may succeed him, but it is one which it will be difficult indeed to follow. The example that he has set has presented a model which one may strive to follow, but which one can never hope to attain. Sir, the difficulties of that Chair, as has been already observed, have not diminished of late years; and I, diffident, as I am under any circumstances to present myself to the House, should feel that those difficulties were insurmountable, if it were not for one thing—that I am confident that if I should be elected to the Chair, and should humbly and firmly try to do my duty, and to act up to the great example which preceding Speakers have set me, I shall have that without which I should be powerless indeed, without which the best Speaker who ever sat in that Chair would be bereft of all power and authority—I mean the moral support, and assistance, and co-operation of this House. Sir, it is to that support and co-operation that I shall look, if the House shall elect me, in dealing with the difficulties of the Chair as they arise. And I hope, Sir, I will make no professions when professions may be so soon tested by experience; but I wish to say this to hon. Gentlemen, that I know full well what is the greatest attribute and ornament of that Chair. I know how necessary it is for any man, who aspires to fill that great Office, to lay aside all that is personal, all that is of Party, all that savours of political predilection, and to subordinate everything to the great interests of the House at large. Humbly, Sir, trusting in that support, I shall endeavour to maintain and to sustain intact the Privileges of this House; to maintain the Rules and Orders of the House; to maintain not only the written law, but, if I may say so, that unwritten law which should appeal to, as it always does appeal to, the minds and consciences of the Gentlemen of the House of Commons. If I have that support, I trust I may be permitted, not only to carry out the formal Rules, but to enforce that unwritten law, and, Sir, to promote and to hand on unimpaired, as they have been handed down by those who preceded the late Speaker, to those who shall succeed me, the traditions of this House, and, over and above all, its most cherished and inestimable tradition—I mean, Sir, that personal courtesy, that interchange of chivalry between Member and Member, which I believe to be compatible with the most effective Party debates and feeling, and which I am sure is one of the oldest, and, I humbly trust, may always be, the most cherished tradition of this great Representative Assembly. Sir, with these few words—and I trust the House will not think I have unduly trespassed upon its time—I sit down, humbly submitting myself to, and placing myself in the hands and at the disposal of, this House.

And Mr. PEEL, being again called to the Chair, was conducted to the Chair by Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Rathbone; where, standing on the upper step,

MR. SPEAKER ELECT said: I am very deeply sensible——

MR. O'DONNELL: I rise to address Sir Thomas May—[*Cries of* "Order!" amid which the hon. Member resumed his seat.]

MR. SPEAKER ELECT, resuming: I am very deeply sensible of the honour—the great, and, to me, unexpected honour—which the House has done me by calling me to this Chair. I can only say, Sir, that the best energies which I possess will be devoted to the service of this House. I again humbly and respectfully thank the House for its indulgence, and pray for its generous support.

MR. SPEAKER ELECT thereupon sat down in the Chair; and the Mace was laid upon the Table.

MR. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to discharge a duty which custom assigns to a person holding my place in the House of Commons—namely, to congratulate you with deep cordiality on the high honour to which you have attained. Sir, I do not consider myself as offering these congratulations in virtue of a connection with a particular Party. I conceive that tradition has assigned to me on this occasion this particular duty, on account, not of my connection with a Party, but of the share attaching to me in the regulation of the Business of this House for the convenience and advantage of all concerned. I venture, therefore, in some sense, to treat myself, observing what has been the usage on former occasions, as expressing the general sense of the House, when I tender to you their congratulations. One word, perhaps, I may be permitted to say in a more personal capacity. You, yourself, following the example of the Mover and Seconder, have alluded to the name you bear; and I may, without impropriety, I think, say that to me it affords no common gratification to witness, and to assist in the elevation to so high a position of the son of a man whose follower I have been, and for whose name and character, down to this late hour of my life, I retain an unbroken and undiminished veneration. Sir, we have known you heretofore only as an able, experienced, and as a respected Member of this House; we shall now know you as an essential part of the vital organization of the Assembly, for no words can express the closeness of the connection that subsists between the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Assembly over which he presides. We shall expect much from you in the high Office you have assumed. We shall expect the exercise of all those qualities you are well known to possess; and especially of that impartiality to which you have referred as the vital and central quality without which every other would fail to win for you that support in the House which is absolutely necessary to the discharge of your Office. We shall expect from you all those counsels in private which your Predecessors have been accustomed to give to every Member of the House as a most valuable assistance in the discharge of its labours, and, expecting from you so much, I trust we shall be willing and anxious to render you something in return. You know, Sir, and the world knows, but the world does not know so fully as we know, the labours of that Chair—that its responsibilities and the anxiety and the difficulty of its duties have grown in a measure even transcending and exceeding the increase of its labours. In your possession of the Chair, but not in your possession of the Chair only, but likewise in your assumption of it at a time when the calls upon its occupant have been so greatly multiplied and enhanced, you will find your title to a support and confidence, as I believe, from every Member of the House, which it is absolutely necessary to render, if we care, I do not say for your character and reputation, which are dear to us all, but if we care for the character and reputation of the House itself, which are dearer to us still, and which are dear to the country in a degree that words fail me to describe. I have thus ventured to convey to you sentiments which I believe to be not my own personal sentiments, but the common sentiments of the House. It is my duty to acquaint the House, in closing, that I have received the command of Her Majesty to signify to the House Her Majesty's pleasure that the Speaker whom they have elected be presented to-morrow, at Two of the Clock, in the House of Peers, for Her Majesty's Royal Approbation.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The Leader of the House, Sir, has addressed the House in accordance with usual custom upon this occasion, and it is equally in accordance with custom, I believe, that I, holding another position, should say a few words in support of that which he has said. I am convinced that I speak the sentiments of all those who sit in this part of the House, when I say that we echo and cordially adopt the opinions and sentiments that have been expressed by the Proposer and Seconder, and by the Leader of the House, with respect to your high personal qualifications, and the claims you have upon our regard and esteem. You, Sir, are no stranger in this Assembly. We have known you long, and we have learned to honour and respect you. And I may add, that in the eloquent and powerful words which you have addressed to us upon the present occasion, we find additional confirmation, were it necessary, of your personal character and ability. Sir, we took note of your words, and we were sure that the sentiment would be yours in which you truly said that in taking that Chair you divested yourself of all Party, or personal, or political character; and we feel assured that in the conduct of the Business of this House, we, and all who sit in it, in whatever part we may sit, will receive at your hands that equal, fair, and impartial treatment, and that protection, if need be, from any difficulties that may come upon us, for which the House has always been in the habit of looking to its Speaker. If your nomination may be said to be due to the Ministry, or the Government of the day, it has been, at all events, accepted generally by the House. Sir, it would ill become me, and it would not become the House itself, to anticipate the action of future Parliaments; but this I may safely say—that so long as you occupy that Chair you will receive on the part of all the Members of the House a full, and entire, and an undivided confidence.

MR. O'DONNELL: It had been my intention, Sir, before you had been placed in the high Office you now occupy, to address a few words to the Clerk of the House who occupied the position of President in the interval which preceded your election; but the words I intended to utter will come just as well now under your presiding authority. It must be well known to those who have observed my course of action in this House that I have been swayed by no consideration other than that of doing justice to the cause I am advocating, and to the body which I have the honour to address. The Proposer and Seconder of your nomination as Speaker laid special stress upon that great fact which used to be the dominant fact in the function of Speaker of this House, that, above all things, he is the protector of the rights of minorities. I did not hear, Sir, in the eloquent words which you addressed to the House, any distinct repetition of the pledge given in your behalf by your Proposers; but I am certain that after your solemn and emphatic declaration of your resolution to put aside every partial feeling, that you will implicitly accept it, and reiterate that declaration of your intention to be the protector of the rights of minorities, as well as Speaker of the House at large. It is not my desire, nor my intention, to resuscitate memories which your own declaration of perfect impartiality should put to sleep for ever; but it was with the utmost satisfaction that I heard your solemn declaration that, from the moment you took your seat in that Chair as Speaker of the House of Commons, the Member for Warwick and all his political antecedents disappeared from the proceedings of this House. For my own part, I certainly trust that I may be able to show myself one of your most obedient subjects; and, trusting above all things that you will resume the ancient tradition of protecting the rights of minorities, I add my humble approbation to the distinct commendations you have received.

MR. GLADSTONE: I now move, "That the House do now adjourn until To-morrow, at Two of the Clock."

MR. SPEAKER ELECT put the Question, which, being agreed to, the House was adjourned accordingly, and Mr. Speaker Elect went away without the Mace before him.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 27th February, 1884.

The House met at a quarter to Twelve of the clock.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, having directed the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to request the attendance of the Members of the House of Commons to hear a Commission read.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The COMMONS being at the Bar, ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL, Esquire, SPEAKER ELECT of the Commons, addressing the Lords Commissioners, said—

My Lords, I have to acquaint your Lordships that Her Majesty's most faithful Commons, in obedience to Her Majesty's command, and in the exercise of their undoubted right, have proceeded to the election of a Speaker, and that their choice has fallen upon me. I now present myself at your Bar, humbly submitting myself, with all humility, for Her Majesty's gracious approval.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said:

My Lords, and Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

It not being convenient for Her Majesty to be personally here present at this time, a Commission has been issued under the Great Seal, commanding us and several other Lords therein named to notify and declare Her Majesty's approbation of Her faithful Commons, choice of Arthur Wellesley Peel, Esquire, and this will appear more fully by the Commission, which will now be read.

And the Commission having been read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: Mr. Peel, we have it in command from Her Majesty to declare Her Majesty's entire confidence in your talents, diligence, and efficiency to fulfil the important duties of the high Office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to which you have been chosen by that House; and, in obedience to the Commission which has been read, and by virtue of the authority therein contained, we do declare Her Majesty's Royal allowance and confirmation of you, Sir, as Speaker of the House of Commons.

Mr. SPEAKER: My Lords, I submit myself in all humility and gratitude to Her Majesty's Royal will and pleasure; and if, in the discharge of my duties and in maintaining the rights and Privileges of the Commons' House of Parliament I shall inadvertently fall into error, I entreat the blame may be imputed to me alone, and not to Her Majesty's faithful Commons.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Two o'clock, till To-morrow, a
quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 27th February, 1884.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers) [6]; Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment [26], *debate adjourned;* Real Assets Administration * [98].

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went; and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER (Members standing uncovered) said: I have to inform the House that this House has this day been summoned to the House of Peers, where the Lords, authorized by Her Majesty's Commission, have signified Her Majesty's approbation of me as Speaker of this House. From this place I again beg to tender my respectful acknowledgments to the House for the great honour which they have conferred upon me by investing me with this great Office; and I again wish to repeat that I place whatever energies I may possess at the entire disposal of this House, and I will consult to the best of my power its rights and its interests.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

DYNAMITE OUTRAGES—THE EXPLOSION AT VICTORIA STATION.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked the Home Secretary, Whether he could give the House any further information as to the recent explosion at Victoria Station?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not know that I can give any information further than that of which the public is already in possession except this—that our first object was to ascertain what was the probable cause of the explosion. Colonel Majendie, Inspector of Explosives at the Home Office, reports there is no doubt the cause of the explosion was by some species of nitro-glycerine compound—not an explosion of gas or gunpowder, but some compound in the nature of dynamite.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—REPORTED SURRENDER OF TOKAR—THE EXPEDITION TO SUAKIN.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked the Prime Minister, Whether the Government had received any information leading them to doubt the accuracy of the report that Tokar had fallen into the hands of Osman Digna?

Mr. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend is aware that information comes to me through the War Office, the Admiralty, or the Foreign Office, and consequently I cannot absolutely speak on this matter at first hand. With that reservation, all I have to say is that we see no reason in our own minds to doubt that Tokar has fallen, but we have not certain and official information of the fact.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: If that is the case, on what authority is General Graham allowed to advance into the interior of the country?

Mr. GLADSTONE: To answer that Question fully it would be necessary for me to produce the exact instructions that have been sent to General Graham. We think that that would be so evil an example that I must express a hope that my hon. Friend will remain satisfied with the general, but not otherwise insignificant, assurance given by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War and by myself on Monday night.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (FURTHER POWERS) BILL.—[BILL 6.]

(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Sir John Dalrymple Hay, Mr. Bryce.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, that as he was the first Member who had had the honour of moving the second reading of a Bill under the new Speaker, he hoped that it would not be out of place if, as an old Friend, and on the part of independent Members, he offered the right hon. Gentleman their hearty congratulations, and echoed the assurance given by the Front Benches that everyone would wish him health and strength for the duties of his high Office. With regard to this Bill, its objects were, in the first place, to make clearer and more defined the 144th section of the Metropolitan Local Management Act, which gave power to the Metropolitan Board of Works to incur certain expense for the good of the Metropolis. In 1878 the Metropolitan Board of Works had become aware of great complaints which were made concerning the water supply of London, and had considered it their duty under that section, and also looking to the wants of the inhabitants of the Metropolis, to bring in two Bills, the first for the purpose of purchasing the Water Companies at a fair and proper price, and the second to give the inhabitants of the Metropolis a fresh and independent supply of pure spring water in every house. That had been the recommendation of the Committee on the subject, which had been presided over by Mr. Ayrton. These Bills were brought in, and he was fortunate enough to secure the second reading of the one for giving a fresh supply; but the opposition which he encountered to the Purchase Bill was so great that he was unable to overcome it, and the measures did not become law. When the expenses of promoting these Bills came before the Auditor, to the great surprise of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and, he ventured to think, to the surprise of most people, the Auditor said that he did not consider that an endeavour to give a better and purer supply of water and to purchase the Water Companies came within the 144th section of the Act. There had been no appeal in the matter, and the consequence was that in the succeeding Session of Parliament an Indemnity Bill had to be brought in, which the House, always disposed to be considerate to a body which it believed was trying to do its duty to the Metropolis, passed. But its introduction had been a very unpleasant necessity. An impression seemed to have gone abroad that he gave certain pledges never to bring in a Bill of the kind again. He certainly did give a pledge that he would not again bring in a Bill that might make it necessary to ask the House for another indemnity; but he never said that he would not introduce a measure more clearly defining the powers of the 144th section of the Act. He was now asking the House to pass a Bill which would enable the Metropolitan Board to deal under that section with the whole water question of the Metropolis. They were endeavouring to do their duty, and perhaps something more. The 2nd clause of this Bill empowered the Metropolitan Board to assist any ratepayer who was striving to assert a great principle. He thought that where a great question of principle was involved, whether in the case of a Gas or Water Company which was charging more than it ought, the municipal authorities of the Metropolis ought to be able to step in and save an individual ratepayer from the great injustice of having to carry on a fight with a powerful Company from Court to Court, such as Mr. Dobbs, in a most patriotic way, had done. The House of Lords had decided that the Water Companies had been charging far too much, and it was desirable that a public body like the Metropolitan Board of Works should protect the interests of the ratepayers against the Companies. Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works was to live or die he knew not. If it lived, it would endeavour to carry out the provisions of this Bill, and if it died he trusted the new Body created would use them as well as the Board had used the powers hitherto entrusted to it. The Bill had not cost 1*d.*, and he intended to use every effort to carry it. Notwithstanding the charges of extravagance which had been brought against the Board, he maintained that their expenditure had been extremely economical and even penurious. All the improvements which they had effected, including the Thames Embankment and the better disposal of sewage, had only resulted in a rate of 6½*d.* in the pound, or less than when the Board was founded. True, the rateable value had increased; but he thought the public works which had been constructed showed that the Board had expended what it received economically and wisely, and that, in fact, it was almost "screwy" sometimes in order to save the rates. He hoped, therefore, the House would pass the second reading of the Bill by a large majority.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg.*)

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON hoped the House would consent to the second reading of the Bill. As a member of a large Metropolitan Vestry, he could say that the action of the Water Companies was one which gave the ratepayers very great annoyance. At this very moment one of the large Water Companies was circulating a paper by means of a house-to-house visitation in the West End calling upon the householders to state the quantity of water they consumed, the number of taps, &c. It was, in fact, a most inquisitorial inquiry in order that the Water Companies might take steps to increase the water rate over the present amount. It was true Mr. Dobbs had fought the question in a most patriotic way; but that was not sufficient. The power asked for by the Metropolitan Board of Works under this Bill was one which would be of very great service to the Vestries in London, as they had not money to fight those great Companies, whether Water, Gas, or Electric Light Companies. He thought the hon. Member had done great service to the whole of the London ratepayers by asking the House to read the Bill a second time.

Mr. COOPE, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that he had to present a Petition against it from the Lambeth Waterworks Company, to the effect that the Bill was highly unjust and unfair to the Water Companies, and that it would be oppressive to the ratepayers. Considering that the two former measures mentioned by the hon. Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) were promoted at a cost to the ratepayers of £16,000 or £17,000, it was a comfort now to learn that the present Bill would cost them nothing. As to the ultimate object of the Bill the House had been kept entirely in the dark; but he presumed, from experience of the past, that the intention afterwards was either to promote a Bill for purchasing the eight Water Companies by arbitration or agreement, or to provide a new supply from a new source of fresh water for the Metropolis. The two former attempts had egregiously failed. The existing Companies had ample powers for sinking deep wells into the chalk; some were already doing this; in fact, the impurity of the water was so infinitesimal that it was not worth while wasting time in discussing the matter. One objection raised by the Water Companies was that, as they contributed £120,000 a-year to the rates, it was unjust that any portion of that money should be used for attacking their own interests. The Companies were being harassed continually, and had to go to a considerable expense in repelling the attacks made upon them. The Companies were entitled to a maximum dividend of 10 per cent, and when they arrived at that maximum the water rates would be reduced. Therefore, by prolonging these attacks on the Companies, that happy period was indefinitely delayed. The Companies had already arranged with thousands of their tenants on the footing of the net annual value in lieu of the gross value, which would result in a certain amount of relief, say, to the extent of 10 per cent. At the same time, there was some excuse to be made for the Companies, who had charged on the annual value, as they were empowered by the Act, throughout the whole of the present century; and, moreover, they had charged upon the same principle as that on which the Government assessed Succession Duty and the Inhabited House Duty. But how would it effect the welfare of the Metropolis if the Corporation, the Metropolitan Board of Works, or the new Municipality which it was proposed to create, took over the supply of water? Looking at the charges of the different Municipalities throughout the country—Manchester, Blackburn, and Liverpool, for instance—he found, in almost every case, that the Metropolis was better and more cheaply served by the private Companies. The latter varied in their charges from 3 to 5 per cent on the net annual value of the premises supplied. In many instances the charges authorized by Parliament were considerably higher, yet the Municipalities enjoying those privileges had frequently to meet a heavy loss, or, as in the case of Blackburn, to levy a rate in aid. As regards the supply of water to shipping, while Liverpool charged 5*s.* 10*d.*, Glasgow 5*s.*, and other towns from 6*s.* 8*d.* to 12*s.* per 1,000 gallons, the charge of the East London Waterworks was only 6*d.* The President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could bear testimony to the promptitude with which the Water Companies had carried out his excellent suggestions. The Water Companies were now in admirable order, and the success or failure of the constant supply depended entirely upon the state of the fittings in a house. Unless they were in good order a frightful waste occurred. A Bill promoted by the Corporation of London proposed that the whole water supply of the Metropolis should be by meter, at the option of the tenant, at a charge of 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons. The only town of any size supplied on this principle was Berlin, and there the charge for water by meter was about three times as much as that proposed by the Corporation. It would seem from this that the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Corporation were to be rivals for popularity. They knew that the Water Companies had plenty of enemies, and they consequently stepped in and said—"We are the friends of the public." He had no hesitation in saying that London had now been made one of the healthiest cities in the world. The Companies had fairly carried out the requirements of the President of the Local Government Board; and although the water supply was not unlimited, it was very plentiful; and with respect to the Fire Brigades, the delay in the supply was almost *nil.* He did not think anyone could complain of the supply; if anything, there was too much pressure. A further advantage from the present system was the flushing of the sewers; and on sanitary grounds alone he could imagine no Bill which would have so serious an effect on the health of the poorer population of London. For these reasons, and because he thought the Bill was ill-timed. he begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, that in seconding this Amendment he did not propose to refer to the many points which the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) had brought under the consideration of the House; but he would confine himself more strictly to the Bill of the Metropolitan Board of Works. This was not the time nor the place in which to enter upon a detailed defence of the action of the Water Companies, no more than it was a few weeks ago, when the Companies appeared in a deputation to the Home Secretary, and he had favoured them, as was his wont, with a long lecture upon their duties and obligations and their failures and shortcomings. They could not then properly answer the Home Secretary. It was a case of "Mine to speak and thine to hear." But he could assure the House that the Companies were most willing and anxious to defend their action, and to show how fully they had carried out the powers vested in them by Acts of Parliament, either before a Select Committee or Royal Commission. Now, this Bill had been called by the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) a mild and modest, a short and simple Bill. It was certainly short and simple, but he thought a good deal of guile and strategy lurked under its mildness and modesty. It was a clever attempt of the Metropolitan Board of Works to largely increase their powers, and yet to save themselves from what their Chairman had called the disagreeable task of applying for an indemnity for the exercise of such powers. He would very briefly recall the recollection of the House to what passed in 1878 and 1879. In 1878 the Board introduced two Bills—the one for the purchase of the Water Companies; the other for the introduction of a new water supply into the Metropolis. The Board was warned over and over again that it would be impossible to pass these Bills, or either of them; but they persisted in proceeding with them. However, the Purchase Bill was withdrawn, after debate, before the second reading; the Supply Bill got a snap second reading on a Wednesday, when there were only a few

Members in the House. The expenses of the Board in merely preparing these Bills cost £15,000, and the Auditor very properly surcharged these expenses. The hon. and gallant Baronet seemed to complain of this ruling of the Auditor, and that there was no appeal from his decision; but he (Sir Henry Holland) would point out that the decision was practically confirmed by Parliament in 1879 by the Act which the Chairman of the Board was compelled to bring in to charge these expenses upon the ratepayers. In the Preamble of that Act—42 & 43 *Vict.* c. 65—it was stated that the two Bills of 1878 were promoted by the Metropolitan Board of Works "in good faith, but beyond the powers conferred upon them by Parliament." Now, by the present Bill the Metropolitan Board of Works desired to secure the liability of the ratepayers in advance. He protested against the second reading, both in the interest of the Water Companies and of the ratepayers. And, first, as regards the Water Companies. He admitted that he was interested both as a Shareholder and as a Director of one of these Companies; but he could never understand an argument which was often used, that because a Member was so interested he ought to refrain from speaking out on behalf of the Companies. On the contrary, he held that as a Director he was doubly bound to protect, to the best of his power, the interests of the shareholders—a very large proportion of whom were trustees of marriage settlements and properties—confided to the charge of the Directors, against any measure which, in their opinion, affected injuriously those interests. Now, if the Metropolitan Board had an absolute security for the costs and expenses incurred in preparing and promoting Bills of this kind relating to Water Companies, those Companies would have no check upon the objects or scope of such Bills; no check against their being of an impracticable or confiscatory character. It might be urged that Parliament would not pass Bills of that character; but although that would protect the Companies against ultimate loss, it would not protect them against the great expenses which they must necessarily incur in preparing to oppose and opposing such measures. It cost the Water Companies over £11,000 to oppose the two hopeless and illegal Bills of 1878, although they combined together so as to lessen the expenses, and kept them down as closely as possible. The security of the Companies against this useless waste of money lay in the check now practically imposed upon the Board by the knowledge that ratepayers were not liable for these expenses, and would resist payment, if the Bills which were brought forward, and in respect of which the expenses were incurred, were "beyond the powers conferred upon the Metropolitan Board of Works by Parliament," or, if within those powers, were unreasonable and impracticable. He (Sir Henry Holland) further joined in the protest made by the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) against this Bill, on the ground of the time at which it had been brought forward. They were told that they were to have a new Municipal Government for London. That Government would possibly have vested in them powers to regulate the supply of gas and water to the Metropolis, even if they did not purchase the rights and powers of the Companies; and it surely was not desirable, until the details of that measure were known, to pass a Bill which might hamper the power of that Municipal Government by putting the Metropolitan Board of Works, if it continued to exist, in a position to deal with the question of the supply of water to the Metropolis. Nor, again, did he (Sir Henry Holland) think that the Metropolitan Board of Works should be entrusted with such large powers as they would practically have if this Bill, securing them their expenses, were passed. The Board had done good work, but they had plenty still to do; and their hands were full. So much he had said in the interest of the Water Companies and their shareholders. But on behalf of the ratepayers, of whom he was one, he entered a strong protest against this Bill. If it was passed they would lose all check upon the action, and even vagaries, of the Board, its officers, and especially its engineer. The latter was a most able man, but as the engineer of the Board he would not be satisfied unless he was engaged upon some new work in the Metropolis. If this Bill was passed, the ratepayers would be saddled in advance with the costs of any proceedings, however impracticable, however expensive. Take, for example, a Bill for providing a new supply of water to the Metropolis. What did the hon. and gallant Baronet say upon this point in 1879? He said—

> "The large question of the supply of fresh water for the whole of the Metropolis was very expensive, and we found it necessary to consult the best engineers and the best chemical analysts to test the various qualities of water."

And this was most fully confirmed by the Schedule of the Act of 1879. He found there the following items: — Counsel, £1,045 15*s.*; Chemists, £1,438 6*s.*; Parliamentary agents, £1,378 3*s.*; Advertisements, £1,105 11*s.* 10*d.*; and Engineers, £6,320 7*s.* 8*d.* All these expenses, it must be remembered, were incurred before the Bills got to a second reading, and would have been doubled or trebled if they had been fought before a Select Committee. If the Bill now before the House was passed, the ratepayers would be liable for the expenses of any Bill which might be brought in, perhaps, against the wishes of a large minority of the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Unless he was misinformed, there was a considerable minority against the Bills 7 of 18~~6~~8. The ratepayers had had to pay the costs of those Bills; let them beware against now making themselves liable in advance for costs of other Bills introduced in a like manner. If this Bill was passed, they would make themselves liable for the costs of Bills though promoted, as were the Bills of 1878, beyond the powers of the Metropolitan Board. It was true that in 1879 the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) said that if the opposition to that Costs Bill was removed, he would never put his name to such Bills 7 as those of 18~~6~~8, "without some consultation with the Government." Those, however, who opposed that Bill, including his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), only withdrew their opposition on the understanding that he should not do so "without the consent of Her Majesty's Government," and he (Sir Henry Holland) held him to that understanding. But even that check was by no means an efficient check upon the future action of the Board; and for these reasons: First, because if a Bill — say, for supply of water to the Metropolis—was introduced by the authority of a large majority of the Board, the Government would hardly like to refuse their formal consent, though they might not be prepared to support the Bill; and, secondly, because the pledge so given by the Chairman was a personal pledge, and would not bind his successor, nor would it bind the Board as a Board, and consequently the majority of the Board might, against the wishes of the Chairman, insist upon promoting such a Bill without the consent of the Government. The Chairman (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) would then, no doubt, as an honourable man retire; but if the Bill were proceeded with, the ratepayers would be liable to defray all the costs and expenses. If this Bill was passed, the Board would, it might be feared, become less careful about the provisions of any Water Bill they might desire to introduce, as their costs would all be secured to them. Surely the ratepayers would not of their own accord thus put their heads into the noose which had been so skilfully prepared for them by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and which would soon be tightened upon them. Surely they would not thus make themselves liable in advance for the costs of any measure in respect of the water supply to London which the Board might think fit to undertake. The precedent would be a bad one; as he thought it very probable that if the Board succeeded with this Bill, they would introduce Bills of a like kind with respect to the supply of gas, and other undertakings affecting the Metropolis. He would conclude by again urging upon the House that this was not a convenient or proper time for putting the Metropolitan Board of Works in a better position to get power over these Water and Gas Companies, when London was to have a new Municipal Government.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Coope.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) that it was not desirable to spend more time than was necessary upon this Bill, especially as the issue it raised was very short; and, therefore, he was anxious at once to state the views of the Government with regard to it. The debate had been to him a very interesting and rather amusing one, because it had brought into prominence matters of great interest to this great City in which we lived. He did not know whether the hon. Member for Middlesex had spoken in his capacity of the Representative of that county or as the advocate of the Water Companies. [Mr. COOPE: No. As representing the interests of the Metropolis.] He confessed that those who heard what the hon. Member had said would rather think that he spoke in the interests of the Water Companies than of the Metropolis. He had always regarded the hon. Member as a Representative of a still stronger interest even than water. He was a very powerful man as Member for Middlesex, and as Representative, apparently, of the two most powerful liquid monopolies in existence. The hon. Member was very wrath with the Metropolitan Board of Works. The hon. Member had been very wrath the other day with the Corporation of London for bringing forward a Water Bill, on the ground that they only represented one square mile of territory; but the hon. Member could scarcely object to the Metropolitan Board of Works for bringing in this Bill on such a ground as that. He confessed that he should have expected to see the two great Bodies, who more or less represented the Metropolis —the Corporation of London and the Metropolitan Board of Works—acting together in the common interest in the matter of the water supply; but it was remarkable that the Bill of the Corporation of London had not received the support of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that when the present Bill was under discussion the Lord Mayor was absent. It was, therefore, quite plain, as the Committee of 1880 pointed out, that the difficulty of London with repect to the question of water was, that that there was no single Municipal Body capable of doing justice to its interests and wants. For his own part, he entirely concurred in the Report of the Committee of 1880, that some Municipal Body should be appointed to take charge of the water supply of the Metropolis and of other similar questions. The position of London as regarded its water supply was lamentable, and the subject should be dealt with not by the Government, but by some body that could properly represent the Metropolis. Since 1880, when the Committee to which he had referred made their Report, there had been expectation and longing that the Representatives of the Metropolis would do something in this matter; but four years had elapsed, and yet nothing had been done. In the present year, however, both Corporations—that of the City of London and that of the Metropolitan Board of Works—had suddenly rushed to the rescue, perhaps, as the hon. Member had suggested, with a desire for popularity, which was in itself an evil ambition. He should rather say that perhaps it savoured of that repentance which sometimes comes to bodies that have reached an advanced period of life. It was not for him, certainly, to discourage repentance of that kind. His support would be given both to the Corporation of London and to the Metropolitan Board of Works—indeed, to any body representing the population of the Metropolis who would attempt to relieve them of a great evil and injustice. The question was, whether they were to give the Metropolitan Board of Works the right to represent interests which could not otherwise defend themselves? It was felt every day that one of the great evils in London was the want of some body who could come forward and act on behalf of the *disjecta membra* of that great City. The Metropolitan Board of Works had, for some purposes, the authority to do that, and he was disposed on every ground to support a proposal which appeared to him perfectly reasonable in itself. The hon. Member said he thought they ought to wait for a magnificent and comprehensive measure. He anticipated the vote of the hon. Member for that great and comprehensive measure; but knowing, perhaps, more about it than than the hon. Member knew, he did not feel that this Bill would at all stand in its way. Certainly he was not at all disposed to restrain the ardour, even if it were of a somewhat new-born character, of the Metropolitan Board of Works or the Corporation of London; and when they came forward with measures fitted to be useful, and appropriate to a mischief requiring to be remedied, he would render them every support in his power.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, he rose to support the Motion of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works that the Bill be read a second time, The Board had fairly stated their immediate intention, and it was impossible for them to state their ultimate intention. The Board asked for powers which it was clearly intended by the wording of the Act that they should possess, but which apparently they were not given. They asked for additional powers to enable them to watch over the interests of the ratepayers; and as the Central Municipal Authority for a large portion of the Metropolis, he could not think that there was any body better fitted to guard the interests of the ratepayers than the Metropolitan Board of Works. He protested against the ratepayers waiting until the proposed large and comprehensive measure dealing with Metropolitan Government became law. He could not think that the feeling of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) with regard to the Water Companies was now shared by the majority. It was said that the Board had brought order out of chaos; and, if so, he thought they might be trusted to bring order out of chaos in the Water Question, and for these reasons he trusted the Bill would be read a second time.

MR. FIRTH said, that if there were to be an autocrat in this matter at all, he would select nobody sooner than the President of the Local Government Board; but, in his opinion, that was one of the forms of our centralized government which ought to be changed. It was argued that the ratepayers, if not satisfied with the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works, could turn them out; but that was just what they could not do, at least for a great many years to come. For that reason he thought these powers should be given to a body which was distinctly representative of the people of London. They were told that the water of the Metropolitan Companies was incontestably pure. Now, he found that from the last Report of Dr. Frankland that of 141,000,000 gallons supplied to the Metropolis daily 8,000,000 only were pure. Of the remainder, 69,941,000 were largely polluted with sewage, and 62,495,000 were occasionally polluted with sewage. The difficulty with respect to the Bill was whether these powers should be given to be exercised on behalf of the London people which had no body distinctly representing it. After giving the matter careful consideration, he had concluded to support the Bill for two reasons. First, because if the Metropolitan Board of Works had power after power given to it, the inevitable result must be to drive home more closely to the inhabitants of London the necessity for having a body directly representing the London people and directly elected by them. The other reason was that if the time should come, as he trusted it might, when a measure in that sense would be introduced, its difficulty would not be increased by this Bill. The powers it gave were perfectly Constitutional; and, having regard to the future, he should give the Bill his support.

MR. BOORD asked what his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) would do with this Bill, supposing it were read a second time? He had been endeavouring to ascertain that, but all he could get from him was that he would tell them next year. He (Mr. Boord) did not at all approve of giving the Metropolitan Board of Works those very large powers, because, for all they knew, his hon. and gallant Friend might be about to oppose the Water Bill of the Corporation of London, and there were strong objections against taxing the ratepayers of London for such a purpose as that.

MR. WARTON said, that the Home Secretary had been engaging in praising himself, and having done that he ran away. The present Government were inclined to make a mistake which they committed once before when in Office—the mistake of "harassing every interest." He did not see why the Water Companies should be abused at all. If they did not supply water as pure as they could supply it, some Act similar to the Adulteration Acts might be passed dealing with the matter. The Water Companies had been started like any other body of adventurers, on the commercial chance of obtaining interest for their money. But there was no reason why, because they had made a successful venture, they should be approached in a hostile spirit. Because Mr. Dobbs had succeeded with reference to one Water Company, showing that it had charged too much, it did not follow that other Companies had done the same. He was altogether opposed to the spirit of confiscation, whether applied to Irish land, to Railways, or to Water Companies. Under this Bill the Metropoplitan Board might stop any scheme of their own, interfere with any scheme that might be proposed by others, and appear in every Court of the land, while all the expense of so doing was to be paid by the unhappy ratepayers. He thought these schemes of confiscation ought to come from other sources. He would advise his hon. and gallant Friend to follow the advice of Augustus to his successors, and not to seek to extend his Empire. He hoped the House would not lend itself to a popular cry for confiscation that he regretted had come from the Conservative Benches rather than from the other side of the House, whence it might more naturally have proceeded.

Mr. E. COLLINS supported the Bill. The situation of the ratepayers at present was intolerable. The hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) said that the only check upon confiscatory Bills of this character was the raising of the rates. Speaking as the Representative of a large body of ratepayers, with a revenue of some £300,000 a-year, he assured the House that no rate that could be levied by a local body would be more cheerfully paid than one to defray the costs incurred under any Bill which would enable the ratepayers to obtain justice in a matter of this kind. It was true that the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works did not directly represent the interests and wishes of the ratepayers; but they did so indirectly. He could say, from his own personal knowledge, that the gentlemen who represented the Vestries on the Board were so amenable to the opinions of those Vestries that they would not dare to act in opposition to them.

Mr. ALAN EGERTON said, that on the 1st of August last year a deputation, to which all the Vestries of London sent representatives, waited on the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who stated that theirs was a cry of distress coming up from London. But the right hon. Gentleman held out no hope of help; but he told them, in effect, to help themselves. This Bill, which was brought forward by the Metropolitan Board of Works, was the outcome of that deputation, and it asked simply to increase the powers already conferred upon the Board of Works. But a red herring had been drawn across the scent, and every sort of dummy had been put up in order to be knocked down again. The Bill simply proposed to confer on one authority that which any authority in the Metropolis did not at present possess. It was a foreshadowing of a central authority. But when was that central authority coming? Were we to be like Spaniards who, when asked to do anything, always said "to-morrow." He would, therefore, ask the House to allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Colonel MAKINS said, he was very sorry to observe the tone of some of the remarks made by the Home Secretary. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Government had not to look after the interests of shareholders. That, as a general proposition, might be more or less true; but the Home Secretary, who was the English Minister of Justice, should know that shareholders in Water Companies had their rights secured to them under 75 Acts of Parliament, and a carelessly-drawn measure which might be brought forward to attack those rights ought to have the reprobation and not the support of the right hon. Gentleman. The Bill introduced by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works not only gave that Body power to raise money by means of rates for the purpose of promoting or passing Bills, but it also gave them power to make inquiries in reference to applications that might be made by Water Companies, and to prosecute or defend legal proceedings. In this rate-ridden Metropolis, therefore, they were to have an additional rate—a litigation rate. It seemed to him that the measure would enable the Board of Works to spend any amount of money, and, at the same time, relieve them of that careful supervision which had hitherto been exercised with so much advantage to the ratepayers by the Public Auditor. The hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), who moved the second reading, said they were checked by the Auditor. What were they checked in? So far as he could see, the Auditor checked them in a piece of extravagance, and he (Colonel Makins) did not think it desirable that facilities for that extravagance should be put into their hands. What was the position of the Water Companies in this matter? They were bound to defend the cause they represented against the attacks made upon their statutory rights. The money spent in that direction, however, did not necessarily come out of the pockets of the shareholders, because it was really money which had been held back so as to prepare for a time when the price of water would be reduced. If, therefore, the Water Companies spent money on litigation, it would have the effect of postponing a reduction of price. With reference to the judgment of the House of Lords in the Dobbs case, it should be remembered that that was only one of four judgments, two of which agreed with the view taken by the Water Companies. The Companies accepted that judgment loyally, as they were bound to do, and they then endeavoured to obtain information, in order to enable them to fix the rate upon the basis laid down. The circular which they sent out was described as being of an inquisitorial character, and almost impertinent; but that was the only course they could adopt in the matter, and the result of receiving no replies was that the Companies were, to some extent, acting in the dark. They fixed a rate which they believed to be right; but it could only be tested when the consumer objected to it, and brought the matter before a Court. When a consumer took a case into Court, he was bound to give that information which he declined or neglected to give in reply to the Companies' circular. As a ratepayer and as a member of Water Companies, he could not regard the Bill now before the House in a favourable light, and if the hon. and gallant Baronet went to a Division, he should be unable to give him his support.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he differed altogether from his hon. and gallant Friend who had just sat down, and he desired to give a reason why this most useful Bill should be supported and passed. In the first place, he might say that he was one of the relics of Mr. Ayrton's Committee which sat some years ago, and examined very fully the question of London Government. The recommendations of that Committee would, he contended, have solved in a far better manner the great question of London Government than the comprehensive measure which some day the Government were to lay on the Table of the House. He held that the Metropolitan Board of Works was a body which represented the intelligence of the Metropolitan districts, and it was likely to represent that intelligence much better than any scheme that might be devised by the Government for creating a body to be elected by harum-scarum ratepayers, who would always be more or less subordinate to the influence of caucuses and wire-pullers. That Board had been charged with extravagance; but the accusation had not been established, and there was no reason to suppose that it would become extravagant after it had acquired the larger powers contemplated by that Bill. Reference had been made to the question of a constant supply of water. It seemed to be supposed that if householders only erected in their houses the apparatus necessary for a constant supply, they would be able to get it; but that was an entire fallacy. He, himself, was one of those unfortunate individuals who had gone to the expense of providing such an apparatus, and when he called on the Water Company to give him a constant supply, they produced a clause of their Act showing that unless a certain proportion of the inhabitants of the district applied for a constant supply he could not have it himself. His neighbours, however, would not go to the same expense as he had done, and therefore he could not obtain a constant supply. In conclusion, having confidence in the Metropolitan Board of Works, and believing that if they were entrusted with the further powers contained in that measure, the inhabitants of London would be put in the way of securing a better supply of water than they had at present, he would support the second reading of that Bill, which, he believed, was more likely to prove useful to the country than many of the measures enumerated in the Gracious Speech from the Throne.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he must express his gratification at the manner in which the Bill had been received on both sides of the House. If the Bill were read a second time, he would endeavour to get it passed as soon as he could. As to the remark that the Bill would yield a provision for life to the solicitor, engineer, and other officers of the Board, he could assure the House that they would not get a penny extra, and would have, on the contrary, a good deal of extra hard work.

MR. COOPE said, that after the declaration of the Government that the Bill would have their support, and gathering from the House generally that it desired that the Bill should go into Committee, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, his desire was to have the Bill considered in Committee of the Whole House—not in a Select Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* next.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 26.]

(*Mr. Anderson, Sir Frederick Milbank, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Passmore Edwards, Mr. Buchanan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: Sir, the circumstances under which this Bill has been introduced, without a word being said in its favour, at this late hour (5 P.M.) on a Wednesday afternoon, reduces the opportunity for its discussion practically to nothing. I took no part in the debate or Division on this Bill last year, for the reason that I believed public opinion had had but little opportunity to pronounce upon the question. Since that time, however, I have been made aware in a most unmistakable manner that the arguments with respect to this Bill are not so entirely on one side of the question as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) and others who think with him are apt to suppose. The reason I say so is, that it has been brought home to my mind that the proposals contained in the Bill will have the effect practically of putting a stop to sports which are the only sports of that kind accessible to poor men, whereas it leaves entirely untouched the sports of that kind which are the sports of the rich. To put it into the plain language of a working man who wrote to me from my own constituency—"What is the poor man to do with his gun if this Bill should pass?" Well, Sir, I think if the hon. Member for Glasgow is going to propose the total abolition of all sporting with a gun such as is calculated to inflict injury on winged creatures he had better honestly say so. If he would do so, then we should know how to deal with him and his measures; but he appears to pursue the more timid course of trying to influence a sentimental minority, and he confines himself to the abolition of sports for those who he imagines are not able to make their objections heard in this House. I believe he has reckoned on this occasion without his host. I am unwilling to allude to the extremely questionable manner in which this measure was recommended to this House last year, and to the questionable invocation of names that should never be used, and under such circumstances as appeared to be entirely unwarrantable. If there is any ground for this Bill it must be the ground that the sports which it proposes to put an end to are sports which are necessarily accompanied with cruelty. But are these sports accompanied with any greater cruelty than that which necessarily attends every sport? If the hon. Gentleman would prove that they were, then he would have done a great deal to ensure the passing of his Bill. But it is not the case that there is any greater cruelty. Information received since the question was first mooted has now conclusively established that in all the better sort of, at all events, clubs and places where sports of this kind are carried on, cruelty is practically rare. If the hon. Gentleman means to confine the measure to poorer clubs, let him honestly say so. If he proposes to exempt Hurlingham or the Gun Club, and other places where it is known that cruelties are not practised, from the operation of the Bill, I will promise a curious reception from his constituents when he asks them for a vote of confidence. The charge of wholesale cruelty cannot be supported. Is it not, therefore, possible for all such cruelty as may arise to be dealt with by the present law restraining cruelty to animals? That is a question which, to my mind, is not yet exhausted. Every facility has been given to the Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to discover anything of the kind. I believe it is fully possible for cruelties in these sports to be dealt with at least to as full an extent as any similar offence by the existing law, and the small number that might escape the operation of the law do not exceed that necessary residue of crime which is inseparable from the infirmity of human laws. Compare that small residue with the amount of interference proposed to be made by the Bill, and it will be admitted that this proposal cannot recommend itself either to the common sense of the country or of the House, but is out of the realm of comparison altogether. The Home Secretary may be pleased enough to laugh when I mention that I have received letters from working men on the subject of the Bill. I hope that in the short time allowed for the discussion of the Bill we may be allowed to hear some expressions of opinion from the Home Secretary. I should be curious to see whether the Government are able to say there has been an increase in the number of public meetings in favour of this Bill passing into law, and whether the Home Secretary will suggest to the House that because working men shoot pigeons and other birds from traps, that is of itself a bad reason why the Bill should be opposed. I will conclude by saying that after the way the Bill was recommended to the House, and that not on one occasion only, including the fact that it was forced through one of its stages on a Saturday afternoon under circumstances, to say the least questionable—for that, if for no other reason, I must oppose this Bill.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, as the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) has referred to me in the course of his speech, I may at once say, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, that they will support the Bill, and for the same reasons as they did last year. I believe that the opinion of the House, which was pronounced by a very large majority last year in favour of the Bill, is totally unchanged, and under these circumstances I think I have said enough.

MR. TOTTENHAM said, that, although not a pigeon-shooter himself, he did not believe that in opposing the Bill he was less humane and less opposed to cruelty than the hon. Gentleman opposite. He regarded the Bill as a measure that would interfere unwarrantably with legitimate sport. It would also interfere with the interest of certain trades and with the interests of a very large number of persons engaged in farming. Last year statements were made in support of the measure, many of which were very highly coloured, if not devoid of foundation, and names were used by the hon. Member and his Friends in a manner which was wholly unwarrantable. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals thought that the Bill was uncalled for, and looked upon it as one which they were not disposed to support. The Returns of the Society showed that during the last 10 years there had been only 25 prosecutions for cruelty to pigeons, &c., on grounds set apart for purposes of sport. This was in itself the strongest evidence that the existing law was more than sufficiently powerful to check any malpractices that might occasionally be discovered. The sport of pigeon-shooting had existed for more than a century, and shooting matches were events which were looked forward to with the greatest delight by the inhabitants of many towns and villages, and which brought together in friendly competition those who could not hope to enjoy other kinds of sport. He failed to see the difference between shooting a pigeon freed from a trap and shooting a pheasant that rose from a furze bush. If one practice was condemned the other should be condemned also. The fact was that this was a mere question of sentiment. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Frederick Milbank), whose name was on the back of the Bill, spoke last year of having seen birds that were not dead brought back by the men or the dog. But surely he did not consider this was done on purpose, because he must know that the same thing frequently occurred at the corner of every cover where the game was collected at the end of the beat. He had seen that over and over again. He would take leave to tell the hon. Baronet that this was not in consequence of a want of humanity, but in consequence of bad shooting. It was idle, therefore, for him to trifle with the subject by giving such puerile illustrations of cruelty as this. Knowing, however, the sporting proclivities of the hon. Baronet, he had had the curiosity to look into his public performances as detailed in the Press and elsewhere, and as showing the interest he had taken in a sport which he now condemned. He was for several years on the committee of one of the leading Clubs formed for the purpose of this sport, and during that time, and also subsequently, he took part in the matches that occurred in those years. Even so late as 1877 he shot in the match between that House and the other House of Parliament; and, being a good shot, he found that in 1871 the hon. Baronet was placed at 27½ yards rise. The result now was that after competing with his friends for so many years he suddenly turned round upon them and said that they did not play fair, and he became a party to a Bill for the purpose of putting a stop to the game altogether. He thought the hon. Baronet might have left that proceeding to others. From certain items of sporting intelligence in the public Press, he found that in 1882 the hon. Baronet was the principal actor in the slaughter of no less than 4,833 grouse on his own moors in Yorkshire, 1,161 birds falling to his own gun. In other years the hon. Baronet's bags were not quite so large as this one, but he generally found that the hon. Baronet had more than his fair proportion of the sport. It was the invariable practice for a sportsman to give his friends the best place at these gatherings, but he found that the hon. Baronet was so keen for blood that he usually took the first place himself. The number of birds killed in 1876 out of a total of six guns was 2,934, of which number the hon. Baronet killed 683. In another year the number was 1,406, of which number the hon. Baronet killed 373. On the occasion when the larger slaughter of birds took place 123 birds were picked up the following days, and these were presumably not the birds which the hon. Baronet said last year had been all killed dead, but those which had escaped his retrievers and wandered away to die. Would he seriously tell the House that there was not more suffering inflicted by himself on any one of those days than by the whole assembly that took part in any one of those pigeon matches which he attended? He might mention a circumstance which occurred the other day. He happened to be in a poulterer's yard in London, and his attention was attracted by a number of hampers that were standing in one corner. He asked what the hampers contained. He was informed that they contained live pheasants to the number of 50. His curiosity being excited, he examined the hampers more closely, and found that they were addressed to "Sir Frederick Milbank, Yorkshire." The hon. Baronet did not seem to think there was any cruelty, at all events, in transferring live birds long distances by rail or otherwise. Perhaps the hon. Baronet would explain to the House what less cruelty he saw in pheasants going from London to Yorkshire than in pigeons coming from Yorkshire to be shot in London. Perhaps his own imagination was too obtuse to appreciate the subtle distinction. There was another very important point to be remembered by many of those who posed as the farmers' friend. It was the effect this Bill would have on a very considerable element of profit in the farmers' receipts in many Northern and Eastern counties. Were hon. Members aware that a very large number of pigeons were annually reared for the purposes of sport, and that a large amount of money was annually paid by those Gun Clubs to the farmers, dealers, and others for the birds which were shot at? He had a return of 15 of the principal Gun Clubs in the Kingdom, and from it it appeared that in the last five years these Clubs alone had purchased for sporting purposes no less than 897,000 birds, at a cost of over £80,000. It was estimated that in Lincolnshire alone the sum of £30,000 was paid annually for the birds reared, and sold for this purpose. Within the past few days he had received upwards of 80 letters from persons unknown to him with reference to the prejudicial effect this Bill would have on the trades of the gunsmith, the gunmaker, the silversmith, the dealer, farmer, and others. These showed that farmers were making from £20 to £50 a-year by their birds, and in the present state of depression in the farming business they could not afford to lose this sum. The writer of one of the letters anticipated that, if the Bill passed, the promoters would next have a shot at fox-hunting, and would compel us to dive for fish, for, of course, they would not allow us to be so cruel as to hook them. He had also received letters from gunmakers and silversmiths complaining of the injury which would be done to their trade. A gunsmith said—

> "What with the Ground Game Act and gun licences, it takes us all our time to carry on; and if this Act be passed it will put an end to the country gun trade altogether."

A silversmith said—

> "Our firm for the last few years has supplied cups to the average amount of £500 a-year for pigeon-shooting prizes;"

and the secretary of a Gun Club wrote that his Club alone had expended £1,300 during the year in the purchase of prizes. A dealer from Kirton Lindsay said—

> "I buy something like £1,000 worth of pigeons a-year for London shooting, and if this Bill passes, instead of pigeons making 2*s.* each, they will make about 4*d.*, which will be a serious loss to the farmers."

A salesman in London said the Act would make a sad hole in the profits of Yorkshire. The secretary of the Gun Club said that the average sum spent in prizes by that Club was £1,320. The dealers in the birds protested against interference with their trade. The secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said that in 10 years there had been 25 prosecutions for the mutilation of pigeons, and that was a small number considering the number of Gun Clubs. In the face of all this testimony, were the professed farmers' friends going to do away with one of the sources of income which accrued to them in these times when help from any source was needed by the sorely-tried agriculturist? Were they going to do away with what was undoubtedly a cheap supply of food for the masses, who could not afford to pay the price they would have to pay for game or birds of that description? Were they going to forbid those who could not afford to enjoy the sport of shooting at game from having the only substitute which was within their reach? Were they going to interfere in the legitimate source of profit, not only of the gun-makers, silversmiths, dealers, salesmen, and farmers, but also the owner of the grounds, who in many cases had been put to heavy expense in making grounds for this special purpose, and this purpose alone? If this sort of legislation of the grand-maternal kind were to be carried out, where were they going to stop? Where were they going to draw the line? What was to be the next thing? Were they going to legislate for fox-hunting, shooting game, coursing, fishing—in fact, all sport of that kind in which animal life was involved? This Bill was only the thin end of the wedge, and we should have an outcry against each one of these sports in turn. If it were necessary to have a more complete supervision of these kind of amusements, in order to prevent malpractices being carried on, by all means let us have them, and he had himself proposed Amendments to that effect last year; but let us not fall into a state of maudlin sentimentality, which was neither logical nor expedient, and which was neither justified by the circumstances nor evidence.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Tottenham.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR FREDERICK MILBANK said, when he entered the House he was not aware that he should be attacked as he had been by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, for supporting the Bill of last year. The hon. Gentleman seemed to know little, if anything, about sport. He accused him of sending hampers of live pheasants down to Yorkshire for the purpose of shooting; but he assured the House that he never sent down any pheasants to be shot in Yorkshire. The pheasants were sent down for the purpose of breeding. The hon. Gentleman also attacked him for having shot numbers of grouse in Yorkshire; but then grouse were wild birds. They were not birds which were handled, put into small hampers, and sent great distances, and they were not artificially raised. They were birds which were bred on the wild, free hills, and whose food was intended for the public good. They were just as good food as beef or mutton. Pigeons were shot from the 1st of February to the beginning of August, at the very time the birds were breeding, and if any one would go into a pigeon cote after a hundred birds had been taken out, he would see the young birds starving in their nests. That was a fact. The hon. Gentleman opposite had probably heard a good deal from the secretary of the Hurlingham Club, from whom he had received letters, some of which were of an extraordinary kind; but all that he had to say was that he left the Club on account, as he considered, of the cruelty that was practised. That was the sole reason why he left it. The very men who kept these pigeons would run out of their way to complain if they saw five or six hares run across their property. It was all very well to say there were £30,000 worth of birds; but he would tell them another fact, that where one farmer kept 1,000 pigeons and his neighbours kept none, those pigeons ate up one-half of the neighbours' crops. If all the farmers in Lincolnshire or Yorkshire would put their heads together and say they would keep pigeon-cotes, it would be all very well, but it would not do to allow 10 farmers to keep them, and others of their neighbours to suffer. The hon. Gentleman said nothing about the betting that went on in these matches. In the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, and in nearly every other place these pigeon-shootings were got up by publicans for the betting and also for the sake of the drinking afterwards. As to his own share in the matches alluded to, he shot fairly, and as to his making larger bags than others, he did not know how it was, but he was never beaten.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (QUEEN'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

Mr. GLADSTONE acquainted the House, that their Address of Monday, the 25th of this instant February, to Her Majesty, praying—

> "That Her Majesty would be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of Her Royal Favour upon the Right honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has, with such distinguished ability and dignity, presided in the Chair of this House; and to assure Her Majesty that whatever expense Her Majesty shall think proper to be incurred upon that account, this House will make good the same,"

has been presented to Her Majesty; and that Her Majesty has been pleased to receive the same very graciously; and has commanded him to acquaint this House that Her Majesty is desirous, in compliance with the wishes of Her faithful Commons, to confer upon the said Right honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand some signal mark of Her Royal Favour; but, as the same cannot be effectually granted and secured without the concurrence of Parliament, Her Majesty recommends to the House of Commons the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose.

Committee to consider Her Majesty's Most Gracious Answer *To-morrow.*

Mr. ONSLOW asked whether that would be the first Business for to-morrow, before the Orders of the Day?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, that will be the first Business. I will make the proper Motion for postponement in order that it may be taken.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 28th February, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Selection, *nominated.*

Public Bill — *Report*—Matrimonial Causes* (20).

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following; viz.,

E. Morley.
E. Lathom.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Boyle.

were appointed, with the Chairman of Committees, a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE CONVENTION WITH THE BOERS.

QUESTION.

The Earl of CARNARVON: My Lords, I have observed from the papers that the Convention with the Boer delegates has been signed, and I should like to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it will be laid on the Table on an early day?

The Earl of DERBY said, the text of the Convention would be laid on the Table at once, and the Correspondence in reference to it would be ready to be laid on the Table in a few days.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 28th February, 1884.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Representation of the People, *debate adjourned.*

Ordered—First Reading—High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) * [121]; Access to Mountains (Scotland) * [122].

First Reading—Contagious Diseases (Animals) * [120].

Referred to Select Committee—Dublin Museum of Science and Art [59].

Committee—Freshwater Fisheries Act Amendment [57]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Greek Marriages * [102].

Considered as amended—Brokers (City of London) * [69].

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Lord KENSINGTON) *reported* Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

I thank you for your loyal and dutiful Address.

It is gratifying to Me to receive the assurance that your careful consideration will be given to the Measures which will be laid before you; and I rely with confidence on your assistance and support in My efforts to promote the welfare of all classes of My Subjects.

QUESTIONS.

MERCANTILE MARINE—ELECTRICAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LIGHT-SHIPS AND THE SHORE.

MR. D. GRANT asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been directed to the necessity that electrical communication should exist between the more important light ships round the coast and the stations on the shore, so as to enable aid to be sent as rapidly as possible to ships in distress?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that he had authorized an experiment to be made with the view to the establishment of electrical communication between the sunk lightship and the shore .Some unexpected difficulties had been found to arise, but he hoped these would be overcome.

EXTRAORDINARY TITHE LEGISLATION.

MR. D. GRANT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Bill for the abolition of Extraordinary Tithe will be introduced at an early period of the present Session?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he hoped that the Bill introduced on this subject by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick) would come on for discussion again this Session. That Bill would be supported by the Government.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM—LIGHTING AND HOURS OF OPENING.

MR. D. GRANT asked the honourable Member for the University of London, as one of the Trustees of the British Museum, Whether, in accordance with the promise given last Session, any steps have been taken to light our great national collection, so as to enable it to remain open until ten o'clock at night; and, if so, with what result?

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, the Trustees of the British Museum have applied to Her Majesty's Government for the funds necessary to supply electric light in the new Natural History Museum. This application has been refused, so far as the present year is concerned; and it is, therefore, impossible for the Trustees to open the Museum in the evening.

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE (BIRTHS AND DEATHS).

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If there would be any objection to extend the inquiries of the present Commission which is investigating the condition and prospects of the Local Government Board Office, to the General Register Office (Births and Deaths), which is an affiliated branch of the former office?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the Registrar General's Office is independent of the Local Government Board, except for Census purposes; any inquiry into it must, therefore, be separate from that now proceeding in the latter Department. But there is no reason to think that any such inquiry is needed, the Office having been thoroughly re-organized under the late Government.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—PROMOTION.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether promotion of Irish National Teachers to First Class is impeded by the regulations now in force; whether a teacher desiring to enter for the examination for promotion to First Class, held every year in July, is obliged, before the previous 1st October, to request the District Inspector to place his name upon the list of candidates; whether, after the name has been placed upon the list, the admission of the teacher to be examined still depends on the result of a visit by the Head Inspector, at some indefinite time between October and July; often after a vacation or a period of farm work, and when the school is at its fullest, with the result that the report made of a visit and examination, at a time of year when the school is in its least efficient state, may deprive the teacher, after months of study, of the right to be examined for promotion; and, whether, with a view to afford facility for improving the condition of the teachers, the system will be so reformed as to allow every teacher who presents himself for the July examination to be examined, leaving the question of the efficiency of the school to be tested by a fixed per-centage of results, at the annual results examination?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the object of the regulations is to secure that promotion shall be a stimulus to, and a reward for, zeal and efficiency; and they do not impede the promotion of any zealous and efficient teacher, but carry it on in a steady and efficient manner. No meritorious teacher is refused admission to enter for examination, merely on the ground that he has not complied with the rule, and requested the District Inspector, before the 1st of October, to place his name in the list of candidates. The visit of the Head Inspector to the intending candidate's school may be made at any time of the year. Its purpose is not anything in the nature of a results examination, or an exhaustive examination of the pupils. Its object is to enable him to certify whether the school is so conducted as to give satisfaction to the public, and to the teacher a right to be examined for promotion. The Commissioners have no present intention of making any alteration in their regulations.

IRELAND—THE LAW OF TRESPASS AS REGARDS HUNTING.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General, Whether the ordinary law of trespass, authorising the expulsion of an intruder, after warning, using no greater force than is requisite for the purpose, may be relied upon by an Irish tenant-farmer in dealing with persons who come upon his lands to hunt, without his permission, and who refuse to leave at his request?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker), in reply, said, the ordinary Law of Trespass might be relied upon in dealing with persons who came upon the land for any unauthorized purposes.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. A. C. BUCHANAN, STAMP DISTRIBUTOR, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Mr. Alexander Carlisle Buchanan, of Riversdale, Omagh, Stamp Distributor of county Tyrone, has attached his name to a public declaration condemning the Government for having deprived Lord Rossmore of the Commission of the Peace; and, what notice will be taken of the matter?

Mr. MACARTNEY asked whether the Lords Commissionors of the Great Seal were supposed to be identical with the Government?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that the Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone ought to be addressed to his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. In answer to the hon. Member for Sligo, Mr. Buchanan had been communicated with, and had stated that, when he signed the document, he was not aware he was signing a declaration condemning the action of the Government. He had expressed regret for what he had done, and the Government would take no further action regarding it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — THREATENING LETTERS — CONVICTION OF THOMAS THORPE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Thomas Thorpe, who pleaded guilty to the charge of writing threatening letters to the Lord Lieutenant at Green Street on the 5th December last, and was sentenced by Lord Chief Justice May, underwent any term of imprisonment consequent on that sentence; whether he is the person who charged Conroy and Hayes or Hynes, in 1882, with writing threatening letters to the postmaster at Avoca, for which they suffered nine months' imprisonment; whether he is the person who charged Fahey and Doyle with attempting to murder, by lowering him with a rope from the bridge into the Avoca River; whether he was charged with perjury and charge withdrawn, on the representation of Sub-Inspector Loch, of Wicklow, that the police were investigating the matter, and if they saw any grounds for doing so would take up the case; and, whether any, and what, steps have been taken by Sub-Inspector Loch in the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, for the offence of writing threatening letters Thomas Thorpe was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment, to date from his committal. That sentence he underwent. He has now, I understand, left the country. He was only one of several witnesses who gave evidence against Conroy and Hayes. I have answered Questions relating to the charge of perjury against Thorpe on previous occasions. The police considered that the law was sufficiently vindicated, and took no further action with regard to the alleged perjury. I may add that the man Lynch, whom the hon. Member referred to in a Question lately, and in regard to whom I stated that he had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment, I have since been informed that the sentence was only six weeks.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—"THE IRISH EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL"—INSPECTORS' REPORTS OF INQUIRY.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in declining to lay upon the Table

> "The notes of evidence taken before Head Inspector M'Callum and District Inspectors Gordon and Moran at an inquiry held in the Belfast Model School, on 7th May 1883, with accompanying reports,"

on the ground that "the reports of Inspectors have been invariably regarded as confidential," he was aware that on 8th March 1875, on the Motion of Mr. Lewis, a Return was ordered by this House for "Copies of the Evidence taken before Mr. Sheridan, Chief of Inspection" (now Junior Secretary),

> "On the inquiry held by order of the National Education Board of Ireland, at the Model School, Londonderry, in May 1874, of his report on such inquiry, of any order or decision of the Board thereon, and of all correspondence relating thereto;"

that this Return was furnished by the Secretaries of the Board on 15th April 1875, and, on 27th May, was ordered by this House to be printed; that the Return contains not only the evidence of twenty-one witnesses examined by Mr. Sheridan, with his report on the inquiry, but several letters and reports to the Board by the late Head Inspector O'Callaghan and District Inspector Bole in relation to certain matters in controversy between them and teachers of the Model School; and, whether, having regard to this precedent, he will produce the similar Papers relating to the Belfast inquiry of 7th May 1883, in reference to the editorship of *The Irish Educational Journal?*

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the case quoted by the hon. Member was exceptional, and the Commissioners of National Education considered the evidence and correspondence regarding it could be produced without disadvantage to the Public Service. That condition did not exist in the case of the Belfast inquiry, and the Papers could not be produced.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE MASSACRE AT SINKAT.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Have the Government received any further tidings as to the fate of the 1,000 women and children in Sinkat; have they any reason to think that any of them escaped; what were the date and words of the first application for information made by them; and, how many such applications were made?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, in a despatch, dated the 12th instant, received by post this morning, from Consul Baker at Suakin, he states that all reports agree that Tewfik Bey was overwhelmed by numbers, and that all perished with the exception of 30 women and six men. Mr. Baker was instructed by telegraph, on the 22nd instant, to ascertain the fate of the women and children in Sinkat. The telegram will be laid before Parliament in the next general Blue Book.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEME FOR CAM CHARITY SCHOOL.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, who had given Notice that he would ask the Vice President of the Council, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, the Scheme framed by the Charity Commissioners for the future management of the charity known as the school founded by Frances Hopton, in the parish of Cam, Gloucestershire, so that an opportunity may be afforded for its discussion in Parliament? said, he found that the scheme had just been circulated. It bore date the 5th of February, since which more than three weeks had elapsed, and he wished to know when it would become law? It would be hardly fair that it should do so in 40 days from the 5th of February.

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that the scheme was laid on the Table on the 5th of February, and he understood that it had been printed and circulated this week. Why that had not been done earlier he was not able to ascertain. The scheme would become law, of course, in the usual way, within 40 days from the 5th instant.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could not take steps, under the circumstances, to enlarge the period? The scheme was objected to by a large portion of the labouring population of the parish, and he wished to explain their objections to the House; but a reasonable interval was necessary for that purpose.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that he had no power in the matter. The time was fixed by Statute.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND)—LEGISLATION.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill this Session dealing with the Scottish Universities?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes, Sir; it is the intention of the Government to introduce such a Bill during the present Session.

RAILWAY RATES (IRELAND)—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

MR. GABBETT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What action has been taken by the Commission on Railway Rates in Ireland; whether a Report has been presented to Parliament with reference thereto; and, whether any Government control will be exercised over the rates of freights, and on Railways in Ireland, on the present action of the Railway Companies to destroy all trade by excessive freights on goods imported to and exported from the south and west of Ireland?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he was not aware that any Report had been presented to Parliament with reference to railway rates in Ireland, nor did he think that, in recent times, any Commission had sat on the subject. But in the Session of 1882 there was a Select Committee on the question of railway rates generally; and he proposed, as early as possible, to introduce a measure, founded in part on the Report of that Committee, and the provisions of the Bill would apply to Ireland as well as to other parts of the United Kingdom.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that when Brian Merriman, a labourer on the Fitzwilliam estate, county Wicklow, applied to get the benefit of the Labourers Act, he was immediately summoned for keeping an unsanitary dwelling, and sentenced to pay a fine of 10*s.* a day for every day he remained in the house after the expiration of a fortnight; whether it is a fact that, on hearing the decision of the Newtown Mount Kennedy Bench of Magistrates, Colonel Tighe, Chairman of the Rathdrum Board of Guardians, stated that the Board should not allow themselves to be made a medium for evicting labourers, who had no place but the poorhouse to go to until proper buildings were provided; whether it has come to his knowledge that a great number of the dwellings of the poor in that locality are unfit for human habitation; and, whether he will send a local inspector to examine into the facts?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the application made by Merriman with reference to the Labourers' Act did not fulfil the requirements of the Act, and, therefore, could not be complied with. The proceedings subsequently taken against him, under the 113 section of the Public Health Act, were taken by order of the Board of Guardians, and on the representation of the Medical Officer of Health. Subsequently, the Guardians did not desire that the magistrates' order should be carried out; and I believe that, the matters complained of having been abated, Merriman was not disturbed. The Chairman of the Board of Guardians is reported to have stated that the Board should not allow themselves to be a means of evicting people. With regard to the condition of labourers' dwellings in the district referred to, the Labourers' Act places on the ratepayers the duty of initiating proceedings to remedy the evils which exist, and I am glad to know that the Act is not inoperative in the Rathdrum Union. The Guardians have put forward 12 schemes relating to 60 dwellings. I do not know any grounds upon which I could direct a special inquiry in this district.

PRISONS (IRELAND) — CATHOLIC PRISONERS IN KILMAINHAM—ATTENDANCE AT DIVINE SERVICE ON SUNDAYS.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Catholic prisoners admitted to Kilmainham Gaol on Saturdays are not allowed to attend Service on Sunday mornings while Protestant prisoners are; and, whether the Governor of this Prison made application to the Prisons Board to flog a prisoner named Daly; and, how long this prisoner was on the plank bed during his imprisonment?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that, in order to prevent infection, all prisoners were required to be medically examined before they were allowed to attend Divine Service. The Roman Catholic Service was at a quarter to 8 in the morning, and the Protestant Service at a quarter to 2 in the afternoon. The one was, therefore, before the usual hour of medical examination, and the other after it. No complaint had ever been made on the subject; but, as the Prisons Board considered that such a difficulty should not exist in the way of prisoners attending service, they were considering what arrangements could be made in order to remove it. The case of Daly was exceptional and peculiar. It was now specially before the Royal Commission on Prisons, and he could not make any statement on the subject.

MR. HARRINGTON asked whether the medical examination was not made only in cases where the Governor suspected the existence of disease?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the question had latterly assumed an important aspect, and it would be considered by the Prisons Board.

LAW AND JUSTICE—ARRANGEMENT OF ASSIZES.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that a scheme is being considered by any Members of the Government for the purpose of rearranging and grouping the existing assize towns in England and Wales so as to avoid the waste of judicial time; and, if so, whether that scheme will, when matured, be made known to this House some reasonable time before it or any part of it which may be capable of being given the force of law by Order in Council shall be so brought into legal operation?

MR. HICKS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in any scheme for re-arranging and grouping the assize towns, regard will be had to the expense, trouble, and loss of time which now presses upon all classes of jurors and others, though in unequal degrees, in different counties?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the matter was not in his hands; but that he had communicated with the Lord Chancellor, who had stated that the whole of the judicial arrangements with reference to the subject were under his consideration, in consultation, of course, with the Judges. The Lord Chancellor had also stated that, although it would be inconvenient to lay before the House beforehand a scheme on which nothing authoritative had been done, he would certainly take care that any Order in Council made upon the matter should be placed before the House, so that the House might express its opinion upon it, as it was empowered to do under the Act of 1875. He was quite sure that the Lord Chancellor would, in these arrangements, have regard to the trouble which might be given to jurors and others.

ARMY—WOOLWICH ARSENAL—SALE OF SURPLUS STORES—THE "REMAIN."

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether, in connection with the present stock-taking of "Remain" of stores now going on at Woolwich, large quantities of obsolete and unserviceable stores are to be sold by auction; whether he will furnish to the House a copy of each Catalogue made for such auction and account purposes; and, whether the results of the "Remain" now proceeding will be compared with the ledger balances; and, if that course is not to be taken, if he would explain the reason?

Mr. BRAND, in reply, said, that the stores in question would be sold by auction or tender; but he thought the hon. Member would, on consideration, see that it was not worth while to incur the expenditure that a printed copy of these catalogues would entail. They were advertised in the Press, and could be obtained on application at the War Office or from the auctioneer. The results of the "Remain" now proceeding were being compared with the ledger balances.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF WARDERS.

Mr. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the warders of Irish prisons have been compelled, under pain of dismissal, to sign an undertaking that they would not use any political influence to obtain an increase of salary; whether a Circular has recently been issued by the Prisons Board, directing unmarried warders who reside in gaols to procure bed, bedding, and furniture at their own expense, and return the bedding and furniture hitherto allowed them by the Prisons Board; whether the salary of £45 per annum, out of which a warder is to maintain himself and furnish his apartments in the gaol, is frequently diminished by fines, which it is in the discretion of the governor of the gaol, as well as the Prisons Board, to inflict; and, whether he proposes to take any steps towards giving this class of officials some better remuneration for their arduous duties?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the attention of public servants generally in Ireland had been called recently to a Treasury Minute of 1867, forbidding the use of political influence in endeavours to obtain increased remuneration. The Prisons Board had not required prison warders to sign any undertaking; but they had been required to place their signatures on the circular issued upon the subject, as evidence of their knowledge of its contents, the same as every other paper that was issued from the prison. No such circular as that referred to in regard to unmarried warders had been issued. Probably the hon. Member referred to the condition imposed upon warders while on probation. If warders were subjected to fines, they were, of course, required to pay them out of their salaries. £45 was the minimum salary of a warder, and he got also apartments, fuel, light, and uniform. The Government did not, at present, intend to enter on the question of warders' remuneration. The whole question of prison management was before a Royal Commission.

Mr. HARRINGTON stated that the second part of his Question did not refer to probationary warders, but to warders in local prisons.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Mr. NORWOOD asked the President of the Board of Trade, To give an assurance to the House that the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill (which, though read the first time on the 6th, was only delivered to Members on the 23rd instant,) shall be deferred for a period sufficient to give proper opportunity for the consideration of its provisions by shipping associations and others interested at the outports; and, whether, to ensure full discussion, he will further arrange that the Motion for the Second Reading shall be the first Order of the Day?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, the Government is very sensible of the importance and propriety of giving a reasonable time for the consideration of this Bill before the second reading is taken; and I am quite ready to give the assurance that is asked from me in the subsequent Question to be put to me by the hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot), and to undertake that the second reading shall not be taken in any case before this day week, Thursday, the 6th March, which would give an interval of 13 days between the distribution of the Bill to Members and the second reading. With regard to its being made the first Order, it would be inconvenient to give an absolute pledge; but I will undertake it shall not be taken unless it can be commenced before the dinner hour.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—IMPORTATION FROM THE UNITED STATES.

MR. BIRKBECK asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether his attention has been called to the fact of a large arrival of live stock having taken place at Liverpool, per *Ontario*, from Portland, Maine, a portion of which were affected with foot and mouth disease; and, whether he will prohibit the importation of live animals from Maine and all adjacent ports?

MR. DODSON: I will answer this Question, as well as a subsequent one in the name of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Guy Dawnay). The facts are briefly these. We received a telegram on February 19, stating that some Herefords, conveyed by the *Ontario* from Liverpool and landed at Portland on February 2nd, had developed foot-and-mouth disease a day or two after their arrival there, and that the *Ontario* had left Portland with cattle and sheep for Liverpool on February 9. We immediately telegraphed to our Inspector at Liverpool to be prepared. The *Ontario* arrived at Liverpool on Friday, February 22nd, with 275 cattle and 639 sheep on board; they were landed at the Foreign Animals' Wharf, Woodville, Birkenhead, and 131 cattle and seven sheep were found to be affected. The whole cargo was slaughtered without delay, and every precaution taken to prevent the escape of infection from the wharf. Further, as we had reason to believe that the places of detention or of embarkation at Portland might be infected, we issued, as a measure of precaution, an order suspending the landing of animals shipped at that port from the 27th instant to March 12th. Directions were also given to prevent the *Ontario* from carrying animals for some time, and we have received a letter from the managing Director of the Company to which the vessel belongs, stating that the vessel will be properly disinfected under the advice and inspection of our Inspector.

SEA FISHERIES ACT, 1883—THE NORTH SEA FISHERIES CONVENTION.

MR. BIRKBECK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether all the Maritime Powers represented at the Hague Conference on the North Sea Fisheries have ratified the Convention agreed upon; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will urge such Powers to ratify the same without further delay?

MR. MARJORIBANKS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, having regard to the deep importance of "The Sea Fisheries Act, 1883," to the fishing interests of this Country, he can state the reasons for the delay in ratifying the International Convention forming the First Schedule of that Act; whether he will state which of the six high contracting parties have not as yet given their adhesion to the terms of the Convention; and, whether he can hold out hopes of a speedy settlement of any remaining differences between the Powers concerned?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, and also to my hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire, I may state that the Powers, parties to the Convention in question, have agreed to ratify it; and they have all, with one exception, forwarded to the Hague the instrument of ratification. The remaining ratification is daily expected, and the deposit will then take place.

POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—REFUSAL OF ADMISSION INTO CASUAL WARDS OF METROPOLITAN WORKHOUSES.

MR. CAINE asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, If it is true that several persons were refused admittance to the Casual Ward of the Whitechapel Workhouse on Friday night the 22nd instant; and, if so, how many; and, if this does not frequently happen at the Whitechapel Workhouse and at other workhouses in the Metropolis?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, we have made inquiries, and find that about 11 o'clock on the night in question four men applied for admission at the casual wards of the Whitechapel Workhouse. There were then 43 male paupers in the wards, and there was only room for one more. The officer on duty offered to admit one of the four; but each refused to enter unless all could be admitted. There has only been one other occasion during the present year—namely, on the 3rd of January, when it was found necessary to refuse admission to the Whitechapel casual wards, in consequence of the wards being full. As regards the Metropolis generally, it is sometimes necessary to refer an applicant at one ward to the ward in an adjoining parish; but we have reason to believe that the number of such cases in the past year has been much less than in previous years. It may be observed that when a pauper cannot be admitted to the casual ward at which he applies, and appears to be unable to go on to the next ward, the rule is to admit him to the workhouse.

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC HOUSES PROHIBITION ACT, 1883.

MR. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it has come to his knowledge that the Act prohibiting the payment of wages in public houses, passed last Session, is being largely evaded in some parts of London; and, if it should appear on inquiry that such is the case, whether he will take steps to have the Law enforced?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have been in communication with the police on this subject; but my information is not yet full enough to make any statement upon it.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—SIERRA LEONE—THE RECENT ANNEXATIONS.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the recent annexations to the Colony of Sierra Leone, of the entire coast line of the Gallinas and Ebemnah (or Sulymah) Countries, and of the Krim Country, extend to only half a mile from high-water mark, thereby leaving the interior still under the Government of native Independent Chiefs; whether it is not the case that no imports or exports to or from the interior can pass through the strip of land annexed without payment of revenue to the Colony of Sierra Leone, which Colony discharges no duties and acknowledges no responsibilities within the Countries from whose trade the revenue is derived; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Papers and Correspondence relating to the said annexations, and the negotiations which led to them?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, the statements contained in the first paragraph of the Question are correct. It is quite true that the Colony acknowledges no responsibilities within the half-mile limit; but it is not true that it discharges no duties. It endeavours, by the payment of fixed stipends to the Native Chiefs, and by frequent friendly visits of its officers, to maintain peace and to encourage trade; and, as a rule, it succeeds in these objects. Besides, the devastating wars of the interior are checked by the control exercised on the importation of arms and ammunition. As to the Papers, it would be very difficult to lay them on the Table just now, because they were connected with other matters which were still under discussion.

IRELAND—MR. TUKE'S EMIGRATION COMMITTEE—THE RELIEVING OFFICER OF BELMULLET UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the man dismissed by Mr. Tuke's Emigration Committee, in the Belmullet district, for having, by false representations, enabled a person emigrated by the Committee to take with him, as his wife, a young girl of seventeen, whom he abducted and seduced, has yet been dismissed from the post of relieving officer in the Belmullet Union?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, although Mr. Tuke's Committee did not feel justified in further employing this man as one of their agents, the Local Government Board could not require his dismissal from the position of relieving officer without a fuller inquiry into the matter. Very little inquiry is required by a private body; but it is different in the case of a Government officer. The Local Government Board are at present in communication with the Board of Guardians on the subject.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE) —THE TROOPS AT SUAKIN.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that the black troops at Suakin have mutinied; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government are taking to supply General Graham with horse artillery and a sufficient force of cavalry? He would also ask, whether it was true that the Marines at Suakin were being mounted?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, Admiral Sir William Hewett has reported that the Black troops at Suakin have refused to obey the orders of their officers. He adds that he will take the first opportunity of sending back Zebehr's Blacks; and I presume, therefore, that it is in that force that the mutiny has occurred. Her Majesty's Government, acting under military advice, are not taking steps to supply Sir Gerald Graham with Horse Artillery, or with more Cavalry, of which arms they have no reason to suppose he has an insufficient force. No requisition has been received from General Graham for additional troops for either of these arms. I have no information respecting the last part of the hon. Member's Question.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Has General Graham any Horse Artillery at all?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state how the Admiralty ascertained that Admiral Sir W. Hewett required only "four" Marine officers to be sent with "280 more Marines;" and, whether it is a fact that, after the despatch of such Marine reinforcements from the Mediterranean fleet to Suakin, other Marine officers that had been left behind had to be sent some days later from that fleet to follow their men to Suakin; and, if so, by whose order?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the orders as to the number of officers detailed to accompany the reinforcement of Marines sent to Suakin were issued by the Admiralty, who took into consideration, not only the requirements of Sir William Hewett, but the circumstances and possible duties of the ships of the Mediterranean Squadron, and also the limited accommodation for passage in ships of war. Five officers went with the 280 Marines, one with the Marines from the *Monarch*, and three officers (including a Field Officer to command) were sent from England *viâ* Brindisi. As soon as the arrival of the *Poonah* at Malta permitted their being spared, additional officers were despatched from the Mediterranean.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Marine Forces landed from Admiral Sir William Hewett's Squadron, on or about the 5th instant, for the defence of Suakin, were, when so placed on shore for purely Military operations, subject to the provisions of the Naval Discipline Act; and, what was the rank of the senior Marine Officer landed on that occasion?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Marines landed for the defence of Suakin are under the immediate command of the Admiral, and are subject to the Naval Discipline Act. I am not aware who was the senior Marine officer landed there on or about the 15th instant; but I have no doubt Sir William Hewett made the best disposition of his officers for the service he had to discharge.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If Her Majesty's Government propose to undertake to keep the peace on the western frontier of the Transvaal as a permanent arrangement; and, whether it is true that the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie has been appointed Commissioner in Bechuanaland?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH also asked, When the Papers will be laid on the Table relating to the negotiations with the Transvaal Delegates and the Convention; and, whether the Under Secretary of State can give any explanation why the full text of that Convention has to-day appeared in the public papers before it has been placed in the hands of Members?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell), in the first part of his Question, asks me to undertake the office of a prophet, for which I do not feel myself qualified. All I can say is that there is nothing inherently temporary in the arrangements which have been made. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), I beg to say the Convention has been laid on the Table to-day, and in two or three days the Papers connected with it will also be laid on the Table. I can give no information as to how the Convention appeared in *The Times.* The reply to the second part of my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell's) Question would be in the affirmative; but, in view of the interest this appointment may excite in South Africa, I might be, perhaps, allowed to add that Mr. Mackenzie, with a complete knowledge of Dutch and Bechuana, has an intimate acquaintance with the district and its inhabitants, and will have great influence over the Natives in keeping them from acts of unrest or aggression. He has always been personally on good terms with the Dutch of the Transvaal and its Borders, and I am informed by Sir Hercules Robinson that for many years he has been chosen as arbiter in numerous disputes between Boers and Natives. He therefore seems eminently fitted to gain the confidence of both sides.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH gave Notice that to-morrow he would ask the Prime Minister, Whether, in view of the repeated instances of the appearance of official documents in newspapers before their distribution among Members, he would give directions that some effectual steps should be taken by the Heads of the various Departments in future to prevent the recurrence of this circumstance?

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE PATRONAGE OF THE JUDGES.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether any, and, if any, what, arrangements have been made, or are in contemplation, as to the Patronage formerly exercised by the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and by the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that up to the present no arrangements had been come to.

Mr. Evelyn Ashley

CUSTOMS—PROMOTION OF OFFICERS AT OUTPORTS.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Lynch) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How many out-door officers at the out-ports of Her Majesty's Customs who have been doing the duties of examining officers for periods ranging from ten to fourteen years, and who have performed those duties with efficiency and to the entire satisfaction of their superior officers, have not been yet promoted to the rank of examining officers; whether other out-door officers of only one-third their services, as also men in London with much less service have been promoted over their heads; and, when their case would be taken into consideration?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, there are six officers in the position described by the hon. Member. Men of less standing have, in some cases, been promoted over them, partly as the result of competition within the Service, partly on the ground of superior efficiency. The cases of these six officers will be considered with others as vacancies arise in the rank of examining officers, and will be decided on their merits.

NAVY—DOCKYARD ACCOUNTS.

Mr. HENDERSON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the accounts of the various manufacturing establishments at Her Majesty's Dockyards are so kept as to show the actual cost of the various articles manufactured there; and, if so, if there will be any objection to grant a Return showing the actual cost of such articles, the quantity manufactured during the last year, and the stock on hand when last taken?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the accounts of the manufacturing establishments at Her Majesty's Dockyards are so kept as to show the cost of manufacture so far as concerns material, labour, and other general expenditure; but they do not include the salaries of the establishment or the cost of plant and machinery. It would be difficult to prepare a general Return, such as my hon. Friend asks for, because the cost of the larger portion of the work turned out of the Dockyard workshops is excluded from these accounts, being charged directly in the shipbuilding accounts to the ship to which it applied, The accounts annually laid before Parliament show the quantities of the principal articles made for store, and their cost, exclusive of establishment charges. To give a Return of the stock in hand of each article would be a work of considerable labour, as the record is not kept in a sufficiently tabulated form for publication.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—TRANSPORT CARS IN CARLOW.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. GRAY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether transport cars for the Constabulary are maintained in the following places in the county Carlow, viz.: Carlow, Tullow, Hacketstown, Baganelstown, Borris, and Leightonbridge; for what purpose they are so maintained; what is the number of men required for this duty; what is the cost of the maintenance of these transport cars; out of what fund is the cost to be paid; and, whether similar arrangements now exist in the other counties in Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, six transport cars are maintained at all the places named, except Leightonbridge. They are used for distant patrolling, and for urgent duties on special occasions. Five men are partially employed in charge of these five cars, but they perform other duties. The average cost of maintenance for each horse and car is £3 5*s.* per month, which is paid out of the Constabulary Vote, and not by the county. Similar arrangements exist in several other counties.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—DOMICILIARY VISITS BY THE POLICE—CASE OF WILLIAM GODSELL.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that on the night of Sunday the 10th inst. District Inspector Connaghton and a party of armed policemen entered the house of an evicted tenant named William Godsell, near Boherbee, county Cork, while the family were in bed; whether it is true that two of the constables, one of them with a lighted candle in his hand, was stationed in the bedroom where Godsell's wife lay, and remained there while the house was being searched, refusing the woman's request to them to withdraw while she should dress herself; what was the object of the search, and what was the result; and, whether any notice will be taken of the conduct of the police in the matter.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, Godsell's house was searched at about 10 o'clock P.M. on the 10th instant. Two men were stationed just inside the door of the bedroom in order to prevent anything from being removed while the search was going on. The bed had a wooden canopy, and the occupants were not visible. It is not the case that Mrs. Godsell requested them to withdraw, or that any complaint was made. The search, which was fruitless, was made in the belief that evidence might be found which would lead to the detection of the writer of threatening notices which have lately been posted in the vicinity. The police acted within their powers.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF FERMANAGH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been officially called to the language attributed to Mr. Archdale, High Sheriff of Fermanagh, who is alleged to have, on the day after his appointment, employed the following words:—

> "I am appointed Sheriff. I hope I won't have a great deal to do; but if ever I get a Parnellite at the end of a rope I will give it a very heavy tug at the other end;"

whether Mr. Archdale will have to perform the duty of summoning juries during his term of office; whether it is not within the authority of the Lord Lieutenant or of the Lord Chancellor to remove this gentleman from office; and, if not, whether Mr. Archdale is a Justice of the Peace; and, if so, whether he will be continued in the magistracy?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the Government had not read, nor seen the words mentioned in the Question. The duty of summoning jurors devolved upon Mr. Archdale, as High Sheriff; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) had no share in selecting them, nor as to the manner in which they were to be summoned. It was not intended to remove Mr. Archdale from the Bench. The High Sheriff could be removed by the Lord Lieutenant, but he did not act as a magistrate during the period he was Sheriff.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED REFUSAL OF CONSTABLES TO PAY CHAPEL DUES.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the letters addressed by the Rev. H. Kellaher, P.P. Grenagh, county Cork, to the Under Secretary for Crime, complaining of the misconduct of the local police in forcing their way, without payment, into the seated portion of the church, and in stationing Protestant members of the force offensively in the chapel yard, during Mass, to spy upon members of the congregation; whether the reply of Mr. Jenkinson was, as to the first charge, that the police had no money; and, as to the second, that these constables were not guilty of any misconduct; and, whether he will make any further inquiry into these complaints?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received the Rev. Mr. Kellaher's letters, and also reports as to the matters he complained of, which were fully inquired into by the district inspector, and do not, in my opinion, call for further notice on the part of the Government. It is true that on a Sunday in last September two constables attending Mass at Grenagh stated to the collector that they had no coppers with them, and were unable on that day to pay the usual charge of 1*d.* for pew accommodation. They had not refused to pay on previous occasions. I do not see in the correspondence any justification for the charge that Protestant policemen were offensively stationed in the chapel yard, and I see no reason to question the propriety of the statement that the constables complained of had not been guilty of any misconduct. I do not propose to take any further steps in the matter.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED BOYCOTTING AT GOREY, COUNTY WEXFORD.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Small) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Edward Smith, a shopkeeper at Clough, near Gorey, in the county of Wexford, who has a number of weekly tenants, some time ago announced that he would evict any of them who dealt with Mr. Thomas Tyrrell, another shopkeeper at the same place; that Smith afterwards brought a civil bill ejectment against one of his tenants named John Hinch, and on the hearing of the ejectment admitted that he had brought it because Hinch had continued to deal with Mr. Tyrrell, and that he subsequently caused Hinch to be actually evicted from his dwelling house; and, whether the matter was reported to the constabulary, and whether they have not taken any proceedings; and, if not, to ask the reason?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am informed that Edward Smith did not make the statement alleged in the first paragraph of the Question; but that he stated to one of his weekly tenants, who owed him money which he would not pay, that he would not keep a house for a person who dealt with Thomas Tyrrell, the other shopkeeper mentioned. However, he took no action in the matter, although his tenants continued to deal with Tyrrell. Smith brought an ejectment against another tenant on account of destruction of fences and trespass of animals. It is alleged, but I do not know on what authority, that he stated in cross-examination that he would not have taken the ejectment proceedings if Hinch had not dealt with Tyrrell. The matter was reported to the constabulary, but they did not consider it to be a case calling for action under the Crimes Act.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—EXAMINATION OF MILITIA OFFICERS.

Major General ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the War Office Regulation, requiring Militia Officers who are candidates for Commissions in the Army to signify to the War Office, three clear months before the examination, their intention to compete, and to forward at the same time a certificate that they have been present at two trainings, practically excludes from the September Examination those Militia Officers whose regiments are called out for training during June, July, and August; and, whether, looking to the hardship entailed by that rule, he is prepared to make any alteration in it.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the object of the rule referred to is that, before competing for the Army, a Militia candidate shall have given nearly two years' service in the Militia; and to admit candidates who have only just completed their second training would defeat that object. The abrogation of the rule would cause hardship to the present candidates at the September examination, by increasing the competition against them, and it would have the further undesirable result of rendering unequal the conditions of competition at the September and March examinations, at which now about equal numbers compete. I may add that I am now considering whether all Militia candidates should not be required to have given a fixed minimum period of service in the Militia before examination for the Army.

ARMY—RETURN OF STRENGTH OF BATTALIONS AND MEN OVER 20 FIT FOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO DEC. 31, 1883.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of battalions now stationed in the United Kingdom, stating the total strength of each such battalion on the 31st December 1883, and the proportion of men over twenty years of age, and otherwise unqualified for Foreign Service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, a rule was made by my Predecessor, in the expediency of which I fully concur, not to give the constitution of individual regiments or battalions. Position on the roster and many other reasons may cause a particular battalion to have more or less young soldiers, and to compare it with another battalion which is under different circumstances may be most misleading. I have no objection to give a Return, if moved for, of the strength of the Infantry as a whole; but, for the reasons stated above and for others which are obvious, I consider that it would not be for the good of the Public Service to show the constitution or strength of separate corps. This answer would, of course, apply also to the Question of the noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil).

SIR HENRY FLETCHER gave Notice that he should move for Returns on this subject.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked if there would be any distinction between the India and Home service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he believed all the information was contained in the Annual Report of the Army; but if the hon. Member wished to have it in a different form, it could be granted. There would be no objection to including India. He might add that he could not answer the Question which stood on the Paper in the name of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil).

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he really hoped the noble Marquess would not decline to answer his Question, which was, Whether he can give the strength of the Royal Irish and East Surrey Regiments, just ordered to the Mediterranean, and the number and age of the men in each regiment who would embark, under one year's service? The question was one of very great importance, because he had reason to suppose that three-fourths, or certainly one-half, of the soldiers sent to Egypt were men under one year's service and under 20 years of age. If so, this was contrary to the Regulations of the Service.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher), who put the Question on the subject just now, has given Notice to move for a Return, and that would be a more convenient opportunity. For the reason stated—but I do not mind repeating it—I object to give the information asked for.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: For these regiments?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I object to give the composition of particular regiments. It would not be for the advantage of the Public Service.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—THE BRIGHTON ELECTION.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) (for Baron HENRY DE WORMS) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to a system of violence alleged to be in existence at Brighton for the purpose of preventing Mr. Marriott and his supporters from addressing the electors; and, whether such proceedings, if adopted, do not constitute an offence under the Corrupt Practices Act?

Mr. INDERWICK: I beg to ask whether Mr. Attorney General has reason to believe that the persons who interrupted Mr. Marriott's meetings are the same persons who persistently interrupted Mr. Romer's meetings, and who stole the watch of one of his committee men?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, my attention was first attracted to this matter by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms), who placed a Notice on the Paper of a Question to the Home Secretary, asking whether his attention had been called to the presence in Brighton of certain gentlemen from Birmingham? That Question has been removed from the Paper. It was in consequence of that Question that inquiries were made, and it was found that, as far as it was possible to ascertain by those who knew the facts, no member of any Liberal Association, and no person from Birmingham in any position whatever, visited Brighton at this election. He asks whether this comes within the Corrupt Practices Act. I have great faith in the efficacy of that Act; but I do not think it can obtain a good hearing for candidates at all times.

EGYPT (ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION)—BAKER PASHA.

Mr. GABBETT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true, as reported by Reuter's telegram, that Baker Pasha, on leaving Suakin for Trinkitat last week, wore a British uniform; and, if so, whether the fact warrants hope that Her Majesty's Government considers that the time has now come when this gallant and most efficient officer may properly be restored to Her Majesty's service?

Dr. FARQUHARSON (for Sir Alexander Gordon) asked, in what capacity Baker Pasha was now serving with the Army of General Graham, and whether his appointment, if any, was from the English Government or from the Egyptian Government?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, authority has been given for Baker Pasha to be attached to the Intelligence Department in the Soudan as an Egyptian officer who was well acquainted with the country. Nothing is known as to the uniform worn by this officer on the occasion referred to, and, consequently, no conclusion can be drawn from it.

IRELAND—MR. HEALY'S SPEECHES.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following words of the junior Member for Monaghan (as reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of 21st):—

> "What justice can we expect in Ireland when sentences are arranged beforehand in the Privy Council? Every indictment is considered in the Privy Council by the Lawsons, the Morrises, the O'Briens, and the Mays. No; when we come to trial our condemnation is cut and dry;"

and, whether he will take the earliest opportunity in his power to refute and explain the extraordinary misconception shown in these words, relative to the Privy Council and the eminent judges referred to?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, there never was a statement made in the House of Commons more entirely without foundation than this as here reported. No law proceedings are considered in the Privy Council, and neither indictments nor sentences are ever discussed there. The question of indictments lies solely with the Law Officers. The question of sentences lies wholly and solely with the Judge who tries the case. I may say that one of the Judges named specifically in the passage in question is not in the Privy Council at all.

Mr. O'BRIEN: May I ask whether the Judges who were Members of the Privy Council might not be parties to advising prosecutions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Certainly not.

VETERINARY DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—RETURNS OF INFECTED ANIMALS.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House, before the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, and without waiting for the issue of the Report of the Veterinary Department, all or any of the Returns with regard to Animals in the Metropolitan Cattle Markets, and also with regard to Infected Animals, which Returns have been numbered from IX. to XIX. in previous Veterinary Reports?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, he had laid on the Table all the Returns asked for by the right hon. Gentleman, and they would be printed with the least possible delay.

POLICE BILL.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will, before taking the second reading of the Police Bill, lay upon the Table of the House a Statement in figures showing the precise effect of the various provisions in the Pension Scale, as set forth in the Fifth Schedule of that measure?

MR. HIBBERT, in reply, said, he should have no objection to lay these figures on the Table, and to postpone the Bill until that day week.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Have any, and what, steps been taken since last August by Her Majesty's Government to meet the grievances of the Indian Medical Service, and to lessen the dissatisfaction which exists in all its ranks?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Sir, last year I stated that, in view to the gradual removal of the existing disadvantages to the Indian Medical Service, of having more officers than there were substantive posts for them to fill, the number of annual appointments would be reduced to the lowest pitch compatible with justice to existing students and the future efficiency of the Department. This measure is still being carried out. Only 10 appointments were made to the Service last year, and only 10 will be made this year. It is not proposed to take any other step but this, which must prove effectual in adjusting a due proportion between the number of charges and of officers to hold them.

MR. GIBSON gave Notice to call attention to this subject at the earliest possible moment.

INLAND REVENUE—PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX—MARKET TOLLS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether or not the persons who levy tolls in fairs and markets in Ireland pay Income or Property Tax on said tolls; and, whether they pay Probate and Succession Duty on the same; and, if not, will he try to recover from the parties for time to come?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, rights of market and fairs and tolls are assessable to Income Tax under Schedule A and to Succession Duty; but not, I believe, to Probate Duty. Payment of the proper taxes is required in these cases as elsewhere.

LAND REVENUE ACTS—CROWN LEASES.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, on expiration of Crown leases, renewals are granted at the fair letting value of the land; and, if at less, on what basis is the renewed rent calculated?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, when Crown leases are renewed, the rents are fixed in accordance with a formal valuation which is then made. This course is prescribed by the Land Revenue Acts, and insures a fair price being obtained.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE DAUNTSEY TRUST.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether Alderman Dauntsey left property in trust to the Mercers' Company for the benefit of the poor of West Lavington, to be enjoyed by them for ever; whether the Charity Commissioners have made a provisional agreement with the Mercers' Company, under which the whole of the valuable property in London under the Dauntsey bequest will become the property of the Mercers' Company on the payment of £30,000; whether the proceeds of this £30,000, with the exception of a portion for the maintenance of almshouses, are to be appropriated for the establishment of a middle-class school at Marlborough or Devizes, or some other town in Wiltshire; whether the poor of West Lavington, among other advantages, are in possession of a free school, of which this scheme will deprive them; and, whether the Government will take steps to prevent the completion of a scheme which takes away the property of the rural poor of West Lavington, and devotes it to the benefit of the middle and wealthier classes of the county?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, I have received the following reply from the

Charity Commissioners to the Question of my hon. Friend:—

"(1.) Apart from his almshouses, which are not in question, Alderman Dauntsey left no property in trust to the Mercers' Company for the benefit of the poor of West Lavington. (2.) The Charity Commissioners have entered into a provisional agreement with the Mercers' Company, under which, for a sum of £30,000, the property left by Alderman Dauntsey to the Mercers' Company is to be freed from all charges for charitable purposes. These charges, as fixed by the will, were (besides repairs) £10 a-year for the master of the Grammar School, and £2 3*s.* 4*d.* a-year for each of seven alms people at West Lavington. These sums were subsequently raised by the Court of Chancery to a yearly sum of £60 in all. (3.) It is proposed to devote part of the £30,000, after provision for the almshouses and for the school in West Lavington, to the purposes of a middle-class school for the county of Wilts. (4.) The poor of West Lavington, in fact, use the Dauntsey Grammar School as an elementary school for boys and pay no fees. The school is badly attended, and is not under Government inspection. Under the intended new scheme it is hoped it will be raised to a proper condition of efficiency."

In reply to the last part of the Question, as to whether the Government will take steps to prevent the completion of a scheme which takes away the property of the rural poor of West Lavington, I can only say that when the scheme comes officially before me, I will endeavour to secure the interest of the poor of that parish; and, if I am rightly informed, the provision made for them will far exceed in the future anything that has been done for them in the past. The scheme was laid on the Table on the 5th instant, and ordered to be printed.

THE ORANGE SOCIETY—INQUIRY INTO ITS NATURE, CHARACTER, AND TENDENCY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will move, or assent to a Motion, for a Select Committee to inquire into the nature, character, and tendency of the Orange Society, and with power to send for persons, papers, and records?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government could not, I think, under any circumstances, have assented to, or made, a Motion of so wide a character as that alluded to in the Question of the hon. Gentleman, even if they had deemed that an inquiry by a Select Committee was the best course to take; but, viewing all the circumstances of the case, what they are prepared to do is this—the Executive will, in the first place, use the best means in its power for ascertaining exactly the facts alleged or suggested by the hon. Member, and any other facts bearing upon them. When they have done that, of course, the result will be made known to the House, and hon. Members will be able to form a judgment upon the whole subject, and take such steps as they may think fit.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that, if the result of these inquiries is not satisfactory, I will call the attention of the House to the facts alleged in my Question, and move for such a Select Committee as I have described.

CENTRAL ASIA—ANNEXATION BY RUSSIA OF MERV.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to recent events in Turkomania and the Russian advance to Merv, Her Majesty's Government will now reconsider the question of extending the Railway from Sibi in the direction of Kandahar, not merely for strategical purposes, but also for facilitating British commerce with Central Asia?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government are sensible of the fact that it may be necessary, as indicated in the Question of the hon. Member, to reconsider the question of extending the railway, at all events, as far as Quetta. It may be well that I should add that there is already in process of construction a road to Quetta by a route which would, in a great measure, be the foundation, if I may so speak, of the proposed railway.

DYNAMITE OUTRAGES—THE EXPLOSION AT VICTORIA STATION.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department a Question of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether he is in a position to give any further particulars about the explosion which took place at Victoria Station, and as to the alleged finding of dynamite in other parts of the Metropolis; and, whether he can state the source from which the dynamite was received or obtained?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, last night, at Charing Cross Station, in consequence of the information that had been received, the clerks particularly observed and searched the luggage there. That was about half-past 11 o'clock at night. I had better, perhaps, read the words of the Report on the matter which I have had from the police—

> "11.30 P.M. yesterday.—James Chamberlain, second cloak-room clerk, when looking over the stored luggage, lifted up a shabby black American-leather portmanteau, two feet by twelve inches, and finding that the weight of the contents was all on one side, he became suspicious, and opened the portmanteau with a duplicate key, finding, on the right hand side, well covered by some newspapers, a quantity of dirty white-looking cakes of an oily nature, four inches by two inches, packed closely around a tin box in the centre, the box being about four inches square, and the edges hermetically sealed with black sealing wax, and parts of an old pair of trousers pushed in between to fill up the space. The left-hand well only contained half an old coat, torn down the middle of the back."

This having been discovered, the box and the material were sent to be examined by Colonel Majendie. I have seen it myself to-day. The tin box was about 6 or 8 inches square. It was a small japanned tin box. It appears it contained a clock—one of the ordinary small clocks that are to be seen in the shops—of American manufacture. It had arranged behind it a small pistol, which was so arranged that by the clock-work it should explode a cap. In proximity to this was placed a cake of a species of dynamite which is unknown in this country, and which is not used here, nor manufactured here, called Atlas Powder. In that cake of dynamite were six of the detonators for exploding dynamite, and loosely arranged round the box, in the portmanteau, were 40 of these cakes, amounting to about 20 lb. weight of dynamite. It appeared that the clock-work had let off the pistol, but the cap had missed fire, in the midst of this dynamite. It is a remarkable circumstance that Colonel Majendie has discovered, at the Victoria Station, in a state of semi-fusion, but quite sufficient to identify it, a mainspring of an exactly similar clock, so there cannot be smallest doubt that the two attempts were made identically in the same way. This dynamite was deposited at the Charing Cross Station on the same night as the explosion at Victoria Station, and the ticket on the portmanteau shows that it was deposited between 7 and 9 on Monday the 25th instant. Since I came to the House I received the following Report from the police:—

> "Mr. Hart, of the Great Western Railway, has just called on me to say that a portmanteau has been found at their station, containing what appears to be similar cakes of dynamite to that found at Charing Cross, and a clock-work arrangement, which, from the description, appears to be the same as that at Charing Cross."

So that there are clearly three deposits of this character, all evidently of the same sorts, and clearly with the same object. The most significant part of the matter, as I have already stated, is that the explosive used is one which is not known, or manufactured, or used in commerce in this country. It is one with which, unfortunately, I am very familiar, because it has been discovered many times in connection with attempted explosions—some of which succeeded, and some did not—at Glasgow, at Liverpool, and in London. It is a ligneous composition of dynamite. Is is manufactured, as we know, in America, and, as far as Colonel Majendie knows, it has never been seen here except in connection with these explosions in this country.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask the Home Secretary, whether, with the view of protecting the public from these attempted explosions, Her Majesty's Government will consider the necessity of taking further legislative powers, particularly such powers as may be available for the expelling from the country of foreigners of whom the police have suspicion?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT asked for Notice of the Question.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he would put the Question on Monday.

MOTION.

—o—

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MOTION FOR POSTPONEMENT.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the Prime Minister, Whether he could give the House any information as to the date at which the Government intended to make progress with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Amendment Bill, which had been sent down from the House of Lords?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he hoped to make arrangements with regard to the Bill mentioned by the hon. Member, as soon as the Representation of the People Bill had been introduced. With that object, he would now, therefore, move the postponement of the Orders of the Day in accordance with the Notice on the Paper.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on Mr. Speaker's Retirement (Queen's Answer to Address) be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Representation of the People Bill."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I hope, Sir, that before the Orders of the Day are postponed, we may have some statement from the right hon. Gentleman as to when Her Majesty's Government intend to proceed with the Bill to which my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincoln (Mr. Chaplin) has referred—a Bill concerning which there is a very great feeling in the country; and, also, when we shall be called upon to vote the Supplementary Estimates for the Army and Navy, which is also a matter which engages the attention of the House and the country. Respecting it, the answer given yesterday was of a very cursory nature.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I thought I had answered the first Question already, when I said that, immediately after we have obtained leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Representation of the People, I shall propose to make arrangements for taking the first stages, or, at any rate, a stage, of the Bill which has come down from the House of Lords in reference to the contagious diseases of animals. With regard to the expenses incurred in Egypt, I am not sure whether my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War is in a position to state what the Estimate will be; but we shall make as early an arrangement for that purpose as is in our power. That is the course which we propose to take, and immediately after this Bill has been introduced we shall make the best arrangements in our power with regard to the other Business of the House.

Mr. RAIKES said, that, before they could accept this matter as decided, he wished to call attention to the imperfect nature of the answers of the Prime Minister to the two Questions which had been put to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). The answer which the right hon. Gentleman had given with regard to the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill really amounted to no answer at all, because the Prime Minister was now in a position, just as much as he would be after he had obtained leave to bring in his Bill, to make any arrangement he thought proper in regard to this measure. But there was a matter which was much more important to the House, which occupied its attention at the present moment almost exclusively, and that was the question of the Vote of Credit. He was very much surprised to see that Supply was not upon the Paper to-day. Considering the sudden emergency which had recently arisen in the Public Service, and the anxious attention which the country was devoting to the affairs on the shores of the Red Sea, it seemed remarkable that the Government should, on the present occasion, think it suitable or proper to distract the public mind from its legitimate and natural preoccupation, by endeavouring to bring before the House questions of organic change which, if they were taken up by the country with that interest which generally attached to them, would serve as a cover to the shortcomings of Her Majesty's Government. He thought that, in these circumstances, it would not be becoming if some protest were not made against this transparent effort to mystify the country. They had on the Paper that day four or five measures of very considerable importance, two of which had already been postponed to give an opportunity for this Motion being made. He referred to the Merchant Shipping Bill and to the Police Bill. They had also upon the Paper another measure which the Government had professed great anxiety to push forward—the Hours of Polling at Elections Bill. It was for the Government to explain why they had changed their front. The Prime Minister had said that only a few words of explanation would be required on introducing the Representation of the People Bill. [Mr. Gladstone: I never said so.] He was speaking within the recollection of the House as to the words used by the right hon. Gentleman when he first referred to the matter, and he must say that that was the view that had been taken of the right hon. Gentleman's statement by hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. It was hardly likely that the House would acquiesce, as a matter of course, in this proposal, and it would have been a dereliction of duty on his part if he had allowed the matter to pass without drawing attention to the subject.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he considered that the House was entitled to some answer from the Prime Minister. The House ought to have some explanation as to how far the Government were entitled to carry on this war in Egypt, and to continue their work of slaughter in the Soudan, without appealing to the House for funds. They were not to be put off by pretexts of legislation which were not required by the country. They were not to be bamboozled by this Reform Bill, in order to enable the Government, at a period of the night when no one was in the House, to smuggle through their Supplementary Estimates — enormous Estimates, which were opposed to all the Government's professions of peace, retrenchment, and reform. He would move that the debate be adjourned, in order to give the Prime Minister an opportunity of replying to the questions that had been put to him.

MR. WARTON in seconding the Motion, said, the House had frequently been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the law required that certain Estimates must be passed by a certain day; and, by attempting to introduce this Bill so early in the Session, the Prime Minister was endeavouring to fill up the time of that House, so as to prevent the adequate discussion of the Estimates before the day came round when it was imperative that they should be passed. The Government were false to all their professions of economy, and were seeking to deprive the House of every opportunity of discussing their expenditure. He considered that the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to introduce was brought forward simply in the interests of the Liberal Party.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I understand that the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) has only moved the adjournment of the debate in order to afford the Prime Minister an opportunity of more fully answering the questions which were put to him by the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). [MR. GLADSTONE: I have answered them.] The right hon. Gentleman says that he has answered them; but I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman has given no reply whatever to those questions. What the right hon. Gentleman said, in effect, was this—

> "I propose this evening to ask the House for leave to introduce a Bill dealing with the representation of the people of this country, and when the House has come to a decision that the Bill may be introduced, then I will tell you what course I will take with regard to the rest of the Business before the House."

But what is the rest of the Business before the House? In the first place, there is the Bill which is considered by the whole of the agricultural community of this country to be a most important and most urgent matter. The right hon. Gentleman might just as well tell us now as to-morrow, or on Monday, or on any other day, when it is intended to proceed with that Bill; but he will tell us nothing until the House gives him leave to introduce his Reform Bill. There is also a matter of even greater moment than the Representation of the People Bill, and that is the question of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan and in Egypt, in respect of which they vouchsafe us no information whatever. It may very well be that Her Majesty's Government do well to be reticent in reference to their intended action in the Soudan and in Egypt, but we have a right to demand a certain amount of information on the subject, and also that the Estimates shall be considered on the earliest day possible, in order that the House may have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon the policy which Her Majesty's Government has pursued in the countries in question. To-morrow is the day ordinarily fixed for the consideration of Supply. Do we not remember the outrageous manner in which no small portion of Supply was last year hurried through the House without due examination and discussion?

Are not Her Majesty's Government bound to take the earliest opportunities for submitting to this House the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates, if the Army and Navy Estimates are not ready for consideration? The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates were circulated this morning. Will Her Majesty's Government tell us whether they propose to set up effective Supply to-morrow or not? If the Government attempt to conceal their intentions as to the arrangement of the Business of the House of Commons, they will not be doing their best to facilitate the consideration of the programme they have laid before Parliament; but if they really desire, as I have no doubt they do, to make progress with that Business, they ought to afford us the opportunities which we have a right to demand for the discussion of those matters which appear to us to be of primary importance. Thus, and thus alone, can they hope to facilitate the progress of that Bill which has absolutely passed from the thoughts of the country, under the influence of the events which have occurred during the last four months.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am not quite sure, Sir, whether the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), or the speeches of the hon. Members who preceded him, have entirely complied with that Rule of the House which lays it down that the discussions on Motions for the Adjournment of the Debate should be strictly confined to the matter of the question before the House. At all events, I think it would be running considerable risk if I were to attempt to enter into a discussion upon the subjects that have been raised. I will endeavour, however, to put a stop, as soon as possible, to this discussion, by giving, as well as I am able, the information which some hon. Gentlemen on the other side are anxious to obtain. With reference to the question which the right hon. Gentleman has just put, I may say that the Civil Service Estimates have been put down, and may possibly be considered in Committee of Supply to-morrow. With regard to the question as to the time at which the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill will be taken, I think the demand of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister is not an unreasonable one. That Bill has only just come down from the House of Lords, and the Government, as we have already stated, are most anxious to make progress with it at the earliest possible moment. But although it is not, as we have been reminded, the only important Business before the House, the mode of dealing with that Bill, and the order in which it should stand in relation to the rest of the important Business before the House, is a subject which must be considered by the Prime Minister, in concert with his Colleagues, before a definite undertaking can be given as to the progress of its future stages; and certainly one important item in the consideration is whether the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister will obtain leave to introduce the Representation of the People Bill. As to the remaining point on which anxiety has been expressed, the time when the Supplementary Estimates are to be considered, it would, no doubt, be extremely convenient for the Government if they could be considered on the earliest possible day; but the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), on Monday, when there was some discussion upon the subject, stated, with perfect accuracy and fairness, that the proper time for discussing the policy of the Government in Egypt and the Soudan will be when those Estimates are laid before the House. If the House is asked to vote the Supplementary Estimates on a very early day, it is probable that we shall not be able to give to the House as full information respecting our policy as we should desire to give. The discussion would, therefore, be extremely imperfect and comparatively useless. Under these circumstances, I think the right hon. Gentleman, who acquiesced in the fairness of the demands of the Government not to give information which, in their opinion, might be prejudicial to the Public Service, will probably desire that the discussion of those Estimates should be postponed to such a time—and I hope it will be a short time—as will enable the Government to give a full explanation and full information to the House. That is all we desire as far as we are concerned.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is only one part of the speech of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) to which I desire to refer. He says, with perfect accuracy, that I acknowledged, on Monday night, it would be hard to press the Government for information with regard to military proceedings which it would not be proper to discuss. At the same time, I was careful to say that I was anxious to be furnished, as early as possible, with an opportunity of discussing the policy of the Government, which I thought they might be able to explain, although they might be debarred from giving information as to military manœuvres.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he would not follow the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) in that part of his speech which, on the second day of the new Speaker's occupancy of the Chair, lectured the Speaker for not interfering with the observations of hon. Members. The noble Marquess had explained that Her Majesty's Government were not yet in a position to explain the policy of the Government in Egypt. He (Mr. Chaplin) never recollected when Her Majesty's Government could explain their policy on any question. Either it was too early, or too late, was the inevitable answer, whenever the Opposition asked for information. He did not think the answer of the noble Marquess was at all a sufficient answer. It amounted to this—that, as soon as the permission of the House had been given to the introduction of the Representation of the People Bill, the Government would be prepared to make some arrangement with regard to the first stage of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. But the first stage was merely the first reading, and what the House wanted to know was, whether the Representation of the People Bill would have to be read a second time before the second reading of the latter Bill? [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] Whether the Committee stage would be postponed until after the Committee stage of the former Bill, whether the two measures would be taken *pari passu*, or what was to be the course of proceeding, if the House was not fully informed on this matter, the conduct of the Government would only tend still further to delay Public Business, because they would not rest satisfied until they had received an assurance that the latter measure, which was exciting such interest throughout the agricultural world, would be speedily proceeded with, and pressed to a conclusion, no matter what might be the fate of the Bill for the Representation of the People, about which he had very little anxiety, and in regard to which he thought there was very little chance of its passing into law.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he had no doubt that hon. Members on that side of the House who took part in that discussion would be told that they were obstructing. ["Hear, hear!"] Whilst welcoming that cheer most heartily, he would further urge that if those who were deeply pledged to support the chief industry in this country, which was now suffering most grievously, and almost approaching disaster from short prices, over taxation, and the importation of foreign diseases—if those hon. Members who knew these things, and who had pledged themselves to their constituents again and again to support their just claims, were to be accused of Obstruction for rising in their places and uttering a protest, he was at that moment proud of the name of Obstructionist. He thought they had a right to demand how long a time was likely to elapse before the Bill touching the importation of foreign disease into this country was introduced, and how long the Representation of the People Bill would stand in the way of the relief of the agriculturist. He knew that hon. Members opposite were impatient at this interruption. They were anxious to get to the Representation of the People Bill, and he did not wonder at that, because they were in a grievous strait, and anybody who had six months' experience of electioneering knew that what was wanted was something to distract the minds of the people of this country. The Government wanted to create a little diversion, and thought that their best course was to bring forward some dazzling scheme of Reform, and to get a great speech from the Prime Minister; but the country was clamouring for reform, and what it would insist upon would be a reform of the Ministerial policy of foreign affairs.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that in the course which he was about to take he should not be open to the charge of obstructing the Business of the House, because he rose for the purpose of exercising whatever small amount of influence he might have over the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and of endeavouring to persuade him to withdraw his Motion. He felt sure that the House wished to begin the discussion on Reform with as much calmness as possible, and he therefore hoped that the House would allow the Motion for Adjournment to be withdrawn. But, in order to anticipate any accusation of Obstruction that might be flung at hon. Members on his side of the House, he would ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to try and fancy themselves on the other side of the House, to place themselves by some prodigious stretch of their imagination in the place of the Opposition, and he would ask the Prime Minister for one moment to imagine himself the Leader of the Opposition. Hon. Gentlemen opposite having done so, and placed themselves in the position which he had described, what, he asked, would have been their conduct if, our domestic and foreign affairs being in the state which they now were in, a Tory Government had proposed to proceed with organic legislation? If the Prime Minister wished to know whether the interest felt by the country in the proposals which the right hon. Gentleman was about to bring forward that evening was absorbing, he had only to look upon the Benches behind him. He ventured to say that, in the course of the Prime Minister's long Parliamentary career, there had never been so poor an array of supporters behind him on any occasion when legislation of grave importance was about to be introduced. What had the Government done with the Liberal Party, and why was not that Party fully represented that evening, in order to prove the interest which the country was supposed to take in Parliamentary Reform? ["Question!"] To pass to the more immediate matter before the House, he would repeat that which was urged by the Opposition—namely, that it was unconstitutional for Her Majesty's Government to carry on a war without having obtained the necessary Supplies from Parliament; and that the question of obtaining those Supplies for warlike purposes must, according to all Constitutional usage and precedent, precede any domestic legislation. The noble Marquess opposite had said that Supply might be taken to-morrow, but the hope of the noble Marquess was vain. If the Secretary of State for War would do what he, perhaps, did not often do—namely, look at the Order Book, he would discover that there were no less than three important Notices of Motion down for to-morrow night, and there was no ground for believing that those Notices would be postponed in order to enable the Government to obtain Supply at a reasonable hour. If he was already aware of that fact, the truth was that the Government proposed to ask the House to consider Civil Service Estimates amounting to £360,000, and Army and Navy Estimates amounting to £500,000, at half-past 12 or 1 in the morning. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) believed that was a proposition that ought to be made known to the public. He did think that when there were bloody battles being fought in the Soudan, when our railway stations were flying in the air, when our cattle were dying by hundreds and thousands, and when our expenditure was increasing by millions, that the Opposition had a fair right to call upon the Government to proceed with the vital Business of the nation, and to postpone their theoretical legislation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I must apologize for rising to address the House upon this Motion, because I must confess I share the doubts and the misgiving of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War as to the orderliness, so to speak, of the discussion. But I shall assume that, in my desire to accommodate the House, I shall receive the same indulgence that was granted to him. Therefore I would say this—that when I stated that we should be prepared to consider if some arrangement could be come to with respect to the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill as soon as the House had decided upon, not necessarily accepted, the Motion which I hope to have the honour to submit to-night, I had in my mind some stage of the Representation of the People Bill which might probably require time, in which case we might expedite the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill as much as possible. Hon. Members know it is necessary to make inquiry as to how far a Bill is likely to proceed smoothly through its stages or not. Our desire is to expedite the former Bill; and if, unhappily, we find that any stage of its progress may seem to require time, we shall make the best arrangements that we can after the question has been submitted to-night. When I said that the general, if not the uniform, practice, has been to dispose in a single night of the question of the introduction of a Franchise Bill, I did not suppose that I was laying upon the patience of Members any severe tax. I ought, perhaps, to have said before that I was not aware that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill had only just reached this House. I believe that the first reading of the Bill will be taken as a matter of course to-night; and with respect to the second reading, it will certainly be put upon the Paper at once, and the second reading fixed for Monday night, in order that the Bill may be printed without delay. If there should be a prospect of serious debate about the measure, then what I have said before will hold good. Hon. Members will recollect that I have already spoken of the interval after the introduction of the Franchise Bill as an interval which we may turn to account by putting forward the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. With regard to the other question, the reason why we have put down the Civil Service Estimates for consideration to-morrow night is, that we wish to take advantage of any such fragment of the night as may be available. We do not, however, think it likely that we shall be able to command such an amount of time as would give us the right to ask the House to discuss a Vote for Military Expenditure which may be made the subject of protracted debate. That is the reason why the Civil Service Estimates have been chosen. Of course, the earlier the day when we can come to a vote upon the military charge, the better will the convenience of the Government be suited. I hope that I may assume that the present discussion may now terminate by the withdrawal of the Motion for Adjournment.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked leave to withdraw the Motion.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he claimed, on behalf of the country, that there should be a due interval between the introduction of the Reform Bill and the day appointed for the second reading of the measure.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on Mr. Speaker's Retirement (Queen's Answer to Address) be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Representation of the People Bill.

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (QUEEN'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

COMMITTEE.

MATTER *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. GLADSTONE, in rising to move the Resolution which stood on the Paper, said: I need only say of the Resolution which I have to propose, that it follows in every substantial particular, not only the substance, but even the words of the last similar Resolution, which was moved on the retirement of Viscount Eversley. I will conclude by moving it.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolved, Nemine Contradicente, That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said Annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the Office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTION.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

MR. GLADSTONE, in rising to move for leave to introduce the Representation of the People Amendment Bill, said:—

Sir, I intend to dismiss altogether from my mind and memory the conversation, or nearly the whole of the conversation, of the last three-quarters of an hour, and shall proceed to address myself to a subject which a large proportion of this House at least believes to be of vital importance, in that full reliance upon the indulgence of the House which my experience assures me I may very safely anticipate. It commonly happens with regard to these large and Constitutional questions—and it is well that it should so happen—that, before they are proposed upon the responsibility of the Queen's Government, they have attained to an advanced stage of progress in the public mind through discussion out-of-doors; and, in consequence, it is not necessary very long to detain the House with the general arguments which, if they were entirely new, would undoubtedly be requisite in order to make a case for the introduction of a Bill. On that part of the subject, therefore, I shall be very brief; but a few words I must necessarily say.

I conceive that this Bill—this proposition—may be presented to the House under any one, and indeed under all, of three distinct and several aspects. In the first place, it is on our part a redemption of a pledge; because, although I do not use the word "pledge" in its more narrow and objectionable sense, there is no doubt, I think, as regards the persons prominently concerned in conducting the affairs of the country in conjunction with the Liberal Party, that at and before, as well as since, the last Election they have constantly assured the country that they regarded the work of Parliamentary Reform as a proper and vital part of the mission, so to speak, of the present Parliament. The proposition may be regarded, secondly, as intended to satisfy a desire, for our belief is that a desire for the extension of the household franchise to the counties is widely and generally entertained among the classes who are to be affected by that extension. But there is another aspect in which I, for one, should hope that it will still more pointedly and constantly be viewed: it is a proposal in satisfaction of a pledge; it is a proposal to meet a desire; but, above all, it is a proposal, in my view, and I think I may say in our view, to add strength to the State. I am not prepared to discuss admission to the franchise as it was discussed 50 years ago, when Lord John Russell had to state, with almost bated breath, that he expected to add in the Three Kingdoms 500,000 to the constituencies. It is not now a question of nicely calculated less or more. I take my stand on the broad principle that the enfranchisement of capable citizens, be they few or be they many—and if they be many so much the better—gives an addition of strength to the State. The strength of the modern State lies in the Representative system. I rejoice to think that in this happy country and under this happy Constitution we have other sources of strength in the respect paid to various orders of the State, and in the authority they enjoy, and in the unbroken course which has been allowed to most of our national traditions; but still, in the main, it is the Representative system which is the strength of the modern State in general, and of the State in this country in particular. Sir, I may say—it is an illustration which will not occupy more than a moment—that never has this great truth been so vividly illustrated as in the War of the American Republic. The convulsion of that country between 1861 and 1865 was, perhaps, the most frightful which ever assailed a national existence. The efforts which were made on both sides were marked. The exertions by which alone the movement was put down were not only extraordinary, they were what would antecedently have been called impossible; and they were only rendered possible by the fact that they proceeded from a nation where every capable citizen was enfranchised, and had a direct and an energetic interest in the well-being and the unity of the State. Sir, the only question that remains in the general argument is, who are capable citizens? and, fortunately, that is a question which, on the present occasion, need not be argued at length, for it has been already settled—in the first place by a solemn legislative judgment acquiesced in by both Parties in the State; and, in the second place, by the experience of the last more than 15 years. Who, Sir, are the capable citizens of the State, whom it is proposed to enfranchise? It is proposed, in the main, to enfranchise the county population on the footing, and according to the measure, that has already been administered to the population of the towns. What are the main constituents of the county population? First of all, they are the minor tradesmen of the country, and the skilled labourers and artizans in all the common arts of life, and especially in connection with our great mining industry. Is there any doubt that these are capable citizens? You hon. Gentlemen opposite have yourselves asserted it by enfranchising them in the towns; and we can only say that we heartily subscribe to the assertion. But besides the artizans and the minor tradesmen scattered throughout our rural towns, we have also to deal with the peasantry of the country. Is there any doubt that the peasantry of the country are capable citizens, qualified for enfranchisement, qualified to make good use of their power as voters? This is a question which has been solved for us by the first and second Reform Bills; because many of the places which under the name of towns are now represented in this House are really rural communities, based upon a peasant constituency. For my part, I should be quite ready to fight the battle of the peasant upon general and argumentative grounds. I believe the peasant generally to be, not in the highest sense, but in a very real sense, a skilled labourer. He is not a man tied down to one mechanical exercise of his physical powers. He is a man who must do many things, and many things which require in him the exercise of active intelligence. But, as I say, it is not necessary to argue on that ground, first of all, because we have got his friends here—on the opposite Benches—from whom we must anticipate great zeal for his enfranchisement; and, secondly, because the question has been settled by legislative authority in the towns, and by practical experience. If he has a defect, it is that he is too ready, perhaps, to work with and to accept the influence of his superiors—superiors, I mean, in worldly station. But that is the last defect that hon. Gentlemen opposite will be disposed to plead against him, and it is a defect that we do not feel ourselves entitled to plead, and that we are not at all inclined to plead. We are ready to take him as he is, and joyfully bring him within the reach of this last and highest privilege of the Constitution. There is only one other word, Sir, to add on this part of the subject. The present position of the franchise is one of greater and grosser anomaly than any in which it has been heretofore placed, because the exclusion of persons of the same class and the same description is more palpable and more pervading than before, being, in fact, spread over the whole country, persons being excluded in one place, while the same persons are admitted in another. I wish just to call the attention of the House to an important fact connected with this part of the question, which is of frequent occurrence. It is a thing which the House detests, and which we in this Bill shall endeavour to avoid—namely, the infliction of personal disfranchisement. Observe how the present state of the Franchise Law brings this about. It is known, and well understood, that a labourer must follow his labour. Where his labour goes, where the works go in which he is employed, he must follow. He cannot remain at a great distance from them; and the instance I will give—and though I am not personally conversant with it, I believe there is no doubt about the fact—is an instance which I think singularly applicable. It is that of the ship-building works on the Clyde. Those works were within the precincts of the City of Glasgow, and the persons who laboured in them were able to remain within the city, being near their work, and at the same time to enjoy the franchise. But the marvellous enterprize of Glasgow, which has made that city the centre and crown of the ship-building business of the world, could not be confined within the limits of the City of Glasgow, and it moved down the river. As the trade moved down the river the artizans required to move down the river with it. That was a matter of necessity, and the obedience to that necessity involves, under the present law, wholesale disfranchisement. That is an argument which is sufficient for disposing of the general question. The whole population, I rejoice to think, have liberty of speech; they have liberty of writing; they have liberty of meeting in public; they have liberty of private association; they have liberty of petitioning Parliament. All these privileges are not privileges taking away from us, diminishing our power and security; they are all of them privileges on the existence of which our security depends. Without them we could not be secure. I ask you to confer upon the very same classes the crowning privilege of voting for a Representative in Parliament, and then I say we, who are strong now as a nation and a State, shall, by virtue of that change, be stronger still.

I shall be obliged, from the circumstances in which I stand, to deal with this subject on its affirmative and on its negative side. I shall endeavour to explain to the House, without undue detail and without affecting too much of legal and technical precision, what are the provisions contained in the Bill that I propose on the part of the Government to introduce. But it will be equally necessary for me to dwell upon proposals which some have expected, and some have desired to see in the Bill, but which the Bill does not contain; because what I have to say upon that subject is vital to all hope of carrying what is contained in the Bill. Now, I have considered what would be the most convenient course of exposition to the House, and I have arrived at this conclusion—I wish to fix and fasten your attention, in the first place, upon the borough franchise as it exists in England, because the borough franchise as it exists in England, with the modifications which we propose to introduce into it, and which I will immediately proceed to explain, is the hinge of the whole Bill. Upon that borough franchise the entire structure holds as respects not only England, but likewise as respects Scotland and as respects Ireland. The borough franchise, as it is, is three-fold. I put entirely out of sight what are sometimes called the "ancient-right" franchises—the case of freemen, the case of liverymen, the case of burgess tenure, and whatever other miscellaneous franchises there are surviving under the old system. I put them aside, for they are not touched by the Bill for reasons which I will afterwards explain. Setting these aside, then, the borough franchise is three-fold. It consists, in the first place, of enfranchised occupiers of buildings of £10 clear annual value, with or without land. That was the franchise established by the Act of 1832. It consists, in the second place, of inhabiting occupiers of rated dwelling-houses. That is the franchise established and extended by the Acts of 1867, 1868, and 1869, and is the principal borough franchise of the country. The third branch of the borough franchise is the lodger franchise. So much for the present borough franchise in England.

Now I come to the future borough franchise which we propose. We leave the "ancient-right" franchises, as I have already said, exactly as they are now. We touch them in no way. We leave the household franchise established by the Act of 1867 exactly as it is now. We leave the lodger franchise exactly as it is now. But we do two things notwithstanding. First of all, for reasons which are partly of principle and partly with a view to unity, we extend the £10 clear yearly value franchise to cases where the occupation is of land without houses or buildings. At present, it may be for houses or buildings alone, or houses or buildings with land. We extend it to land alone without buildings. There is a more important change which we propose to introduce, and it is also in the direction of extension. We propose to establish a new franchise, which I should call—till a better phrase be discovered—the service franchise. It will be given to persons who are inhabitants, and, in the sense of inhabitancy, who are occupiers. The present law restricts, I believe, the signification of the term "occupiers" to those who are either owners or tenants. Our object is to provide a franchise for those inhabitants who are neither owners nor tenants; but they must be householders in this sense—either, in the first place, that they are actual inhabitants; or, in the second place, that there is no other inhabitant with them, superseding them or standing in the same position with them; and, in the third place, they must either be inhabitants of an integral house, or else of that separate part of a house which, at any rate, so far as England is concerned, has already been declared to be a house for electoral purposes. Hon. Gentlemen are aware of the general reasons which may be pleaded in favour of this enlargement. It is an enlargement absolutely required by the principle of this Bill, because the principal and central idea of this Bill is to give every householder a vote. The householder is just as much a householder, and has just as much the responsibility of a householder, whether he is in the eye of the law an owner or a tenant, or whether he is not, provided he is an inhabitant in the sense I have described. And this service franchise is a far-reaching franchise. It goes to men of high class, who inhabit valuable houses, as the officers of great institutions. It descends to men of humble class, who are the servants of the gentry, or the servants of the farmer, or the servants of some other employer of labour, who are neither owners nor tenants, and who, in many cases, cannot be held as tenants, in consequence of the essential conditions intended to be realized through their labours, but who fully fulfil the idea of responsible inhabitant householders. The House will, therefore, see that in the future borough franchise, if our proposals be adopted, there will be a four-fold occupation or householding franchise—the old clear yearly value franchise of the Act of 1832; the lodger franchise of the Act of 1867; the service franchise of the Act—as I trust—of 1884; and there will be, what is the most important of them all, the household franchise proposed in 1867, and developed from its original narrow and stunted proportions partly by the votes of this House and partly by subsequent Acts of Parliament into what it is now—namely, the principal franchise of the cities and towns of this country. If hon. Gentlemen will be good enough to retain in their minds this four-fold occupation franchise—the principal and almost exclusive basis of the franchise in English boroughs hereafter—they will have laid down a fixed standing point, from which they will be easily able to follow me in everything which I have further to explain.

I pass from the boroughs of England to the counties of England. The present county franchise I shall describe without any attempt at technical precision, but in popular terms, and I throw it into three classes. There is, first of all, the £50 rental franchise of occupiers introduced under what was called "the Chandos Clause" in the Act of 1832; and, next to this, the £12 rating franchise of occupiers introduced by the Act of 1867. These are different in their minute conditions, although they are alike in certain of these conditions, and in this condition particularly — that neither the one nor the other requires residence, and yet that they both of them fall under the condition of occupation franchise. The third description of the voter in the county is the voter in respect of property. Here again I shall not descend into detail, but simply say that by the voter in respect of property, I mean the man who votes in respect of a freehold, in respect of a copyhold, or in respect of a leasehold. That is the present county franchise.

And now, you will ask, how do we propose to deal with it? We propose to proceed as follows:—I name the minor changes first. The first of these changes is one which is really intended for no other purpose than that of practical convenience and simplicity. It is, that we propose to abolish the £50 franchise, which I shall call, for convenience sake, the £50 rental franchise. I propose to abolish it, because two categories of franchise, where only one is necessary, are highly inconvenient in the ratebooks and registration of the country, and because we believe it is hardly possible that there will be any man entitled to this £50 rental franchise who will not come within the county franchise as we propose it for the future. The second change we propose is to reduce the figure of the rating franchise of 1867 from £12 rateable value to £10 clear yearly value. Those who hear me are aware that that will be a reduction greater in amount than the mere difference between £12 and £10, and it will appear, I think, as I proceed farther, why it is that we propose to place this franchise on the basis of the clear yearly value rather than on the basis of the rateable value — namely, because we thereby get a definition which we think will run tolerably well through the three countries. Sir, to this franchise we do not propose to attach the condition of residence. These, as I have said, are the minor changes.

But I now come to the main change of the Bill. It is this. I have said there were four occupation franchises in boroughs, one of them the £10 clear yearly value, the other three, the household, the lodger, and the service franchise. Those three we propose to import into the counties precisely as they are to be in the boroughs. Now, I hope that will be clearly understood, because I wish to fasten attention upon it, as it is the main, the most operative, and the most extensive, perhaps I should also say the most beneficial, change that is proposed.

Well, then, with regard to the property franchises, I will not dwell upon them at length, but I will simply for the present say this much—We maintain the property franchises in principle, but we propose provisions which we think are necessary, in order to secure them against abuses which are known in many parts of the country, and which in some parts are grievous and menacing to the people. Now, I wish to keep together all that relates to the question of occupation. Sir, a fundamental part of the structure of this Bill is the union of the Three Kingdoms in one measure and essentially, so far as we, without undue complexity, can achieve it, not only in one measure, but in one and the same franchise.

I pass from England to the case of Scotland, which is a comparatively simple case. My first observation with respect to Scotland, which I beg hon. Members from Scotland to bear in mind, is, that we leave Scotland everything she at present possesses. She has certain peculiarities, and especially in regard to the borough franchise; it is not necessary for me to enter upon them now, but everything that is peculiar to Scotland will be left as it is. In the second place, we import the service franchise into Scotch boroughs, the Scotch boroughs being already possessed of the lodger and the household franchise, and likewise the £10 clear yearly value franchise. In that way we establish an identity of franchise between Scotch and English boroughs, with the exception of those small peculiarities which we find in either country. I have done now with the Scotch boroughs. As regards the Scotch counties, the case is pretty simple. We follow the line already laid down for English counties, and we propose to absorb in Scotland, as in England, the £50 rental franchise, which we believe will be quite unnecessary, and will be absorbed in what is now the £14 rated franchise. We propose to reduce that £14 rated franchise to the £10 clear yearly value franchise, as in England. We also import into Scotch counties the three franchises which they at present want, as the English counties want them—the household, the lodger, and the service franchises. The House will thus understand that we have got to a virtual identity of the franchise, with small and insignificant exceptions, as between Scotland and England.

The case of Ireland is rather more complicated; but, with the patient kindness of the House, I am sure there will be no difficulty in explaining what we propose to do. The present borough franchise in Ireland is two-fold. In the first place, there is the £4 rating franchise; but that franchise is not subject to the limitation of the £10 clear yearly value franchise, as in England—namely, that it must consist either of buildings, or of buildings and land. It is a franchise which may exist with respect to land alone. Besides that £4 rating franchise there is the lodger franchise. With regard to the borough franchise in Ireland for the future, we propose to leave the lodger franchise as it is now. With regard to the £4 rating franchise, I think it will convey the clearest idea if I say that we propose to abolish it; and there will be a franchise, according to our plan, dependent upon value, and it will be a franchise of £10 clear yearly value, retaining all the other conditions of the £4 rating franchise, and identical with the £10 clear yearly value franchise in England and Scotland, except that each of the three countries has its own separate method of ascertaining what the clear yearly value is, with which we do not propose to interfere. We leave the lodger franchise as it is, and we import into Irish boroughs the service franchise and the household franchise, which is the great thing we have in view, precisely as in England.

With respect to the Irish counties, the matter is simple. We there have to deal with a franchise analogous to the £12 rating franchise in England. We simply reduce the county franchise in Ireland to one of £10 clear yearly value, without altering its conditions in other respects. This is in itself a small change. Having done that, we introduce the great change in Ireland which we propose in England and in Scotland, and we establish in Irish counties, as in Scotland and England, in the first place the lodger franchise, in the second place the service franchise, and in the third place, and far above all, the household franchise. The House, I think, will see, therefore, in the first place, how far we have gone towards the identification of borough and county franchise; and, in the second place, that we have gone the whole length that it was possible to go in the identification of the franchise in the Three Kingdoms, and it is a vital and essential part of our measure that they should be treated upon a footing of perfect political equality.

I have done now with the occupation franchises; and the reason why I have separated them from the property franchises is this—that occupation will inevitably be, under the new system, the ground and main foundation of our electoral system. Now, the property franchises will, and must, be few in number. The legitimate property franchises may be, perhaps, somewhat fewer than now; but they must be fewer in number in comparison with the occupation franchises. It is not possible to estimate with precision what proportion of our franchises hereafter will be occupation franchises; but I, certainly for myself, could not place the proportion of occupying franchises to property franchises, under the operation of this measure, at a lower rate than five as compared to one.

Now I come to the question of property franchise in English counties. Scotland and Ireland are also equally affected, so I shall not make separate statements with regard to them. As I have said, the property franchises in our English counties are freehold, copyhold, and leasehold. We propose that they shall in principle remain; and the first question that arises is, Shall they, or shall they not, be made subject to the condition of residence? We are of opinion, Sir, that upon the whole it is not necessary that they should be subjected to the condition of residence. There is a sort of show about the old English electoral law as if its original principle made residence a condition of the property franchise, which was then the exclusive county franchise. But we do not find that that idea bears scrutiny. The two matters of fact to which alone I need refer are first of all the dictum of Lord Coke, delivered in 1620, which governed the action of the House of Commons, and governed the practice thereafter. I will not enter into a detail of the case; but Lord Coke's declaration—and the House of Commons acted upon it—was that residence was not enforced as a condition of the property franchise, according to the usage established in this country. And so it continued, and matters continued to be regulated upon that footing for a great length of time until we arrive at the Reign of George III. and the Ministry of Lord North. In the time of that Ministry, but not by the action of that Ministry, and not under the influence of that Ministry, but apparently by the spontaneous action of the House of Commons itself, a Bill was introduced which finally and formally dissociated residence from the exercise of the franchise in respect of property. That is the state of things we find established, and which, so far as residence is concerned, we propose to leave. We in no way alter the Law of Residence, but we do feel that it is quite necessary to make provision against abuses. Those abuses are undoubtedly connected in a great degree with non-residence. I think that if we compare the number of non-resident voters in counties generally with the total county constituencies, we shall find that they are about one-eleventh part. But I am familiar with the case of a county where the non-resident voters are one-fourth part of the constituency. I need not explain to the House what kind of voters they are, or by what process they have appeared upon the roll of county electors, nor will I go into further details into facts to justify at this moment the propositions which we shall be amply able to justify, should they be questioned. At present my object is to lay clearly before the House our proposal rather than to support and defend it in detail.

We propose, then, Sir, two enactments. In the first place, we propose to disqualify, with due exceptions, those incorporeal hereditaments which are, or readily may be, employed for the creation of fictitious votes. Those incorporeal hereditaments may be classed under two principal categories; in the first of these categories are rent-charges; and in the second are feus, head rents, and the like, where there is no reversion to the person who takes the benefit of the feu or head rent. Well, Sir, we think that it is manifest that there is one just exception, and that is the exception of the tithe rent-charge of a parish held in single ownership. If we do not retain the condition of single ownership, tithe rent-charge, made, as it is, on every field, would evidently become favourable to the creation of fictitious votes, not in Scotland, where they are not so happy as to possess it, but in England. But the tithe rent-charge is usually held for the parish; and the tithe rent-charge, not only because it is a very ancient property—perhaps the most ancient interest in land which exists in the country—but also because it is a rateable one—indeed, it has the quality of rateability more than any other description of property—we distinctly except, and hold that it should continue to qualify as now. That is one provision against incorporeal hereditaments of the description I have named. There are other incorporeal hereditaments, rather numerous, I believe, in kind, but less significant and important, to which I need not refer. Then the other provision we propose to make is a provision against the sub-division of hereditaments. That is the other grand instrument by which this great operation—I might almost call it one of the staple manufactures of the country—the manufacture of votes—is conducted by the most skilled of all the capitalists who apply themselves to that particular work. I have in my possession a photograph of a hereditament, a certain structure not very imposing in itself, occupied by a single person, and conferring one occupation franchise, but held by 45 owners—every one of whom stands on the Register in virtue of his 45th part of this building, which qualifies only a single occupation voter. But it is right and necessary that we should distinguish between sub-division for Parliamentary purposes and sub-division which arises in the natural course of family transactions or of business; and I may therefore say at once that we except from our disqualifying provision as to sub-division, cases where the share of sub-divided property is obtained by descent, by succession, by marriage, by marriage settlement, or by will. There is another case, an important case, which ought to be taken in view, and which will be provided for, but in another manner. There may be a case of a joint ownership for the purposes of trade or business, and it may be said that the persons having such joint ownership, and using it for trade or business, ought not to be disqualified; nor will they be disqualified, because as joint occupiers they will be registered in respect of their trade or business. But we strike, and I hope strike effectually, at the fictitious vote, and by the fictitious vote I mean two descriptions of franchise—one, where there is no real proprietary interest at all, but a naked dominion, divested of every incident of dominion, and dependent merely on a life, and not always dependent on the life of the person himself who holds it, but dependent on some other's life. That is the worst, and what I may call the lowest, description of fictitious vote. But we also strike at fictitious votes where they have been secured through the machinery I have just been referring to, either of incorporeal hereditaments or of sub-division, and where there is no natural association with place; because we hold that when Parliament gives the franchise to a certain county or a certain town, its meaning is that that franchise is to be exercised by the people who belong to it, and not by a set of strangers who come in by surreptitious means, overpowering the genuine Constitutional majority by a foreign importation, or, to employ words that have lately been used, by an invasion from without.

Sir, I think the House will now see that the Bill I am proposing to introduce is substantially, though not technically, confined to one main view, one great provision—to give unity and completeness to the household and occupation franchises throughout the United Kingdom. The principle upon which it proceeds is, that the head of every household, under the conditions of the law, shall vote; and we seek to go as far as we can to get the heads of households and enfranchise them. The lodger and service franchises we look upon simply as branches—I may call them enlargements—of the household franchise. It is, in point of fact, if it is to be described by a single phrase, a Household Franchise Bill for the United Kingdom; and the popular idea has not been far wrong which has seized upon the conception of it as a measure which is to extend to the counties what is now enjoyed by the towns, although in making that extension we endeavour to accompany it with some further provisions for giving greater completeness in practical application to the idea of household franchise. Now, let me say shortly, we leave the "ancient-right" franchises alone. Let me say that we disfranchise personally no one. Wherever there is a provision in the Bill which would operate against the creation of franchises hereafter, identical in principle with some that now exist, we do not interfere with the right already legally acquired, however illegitimate it may seem to be. We leave the property vote alone, and confine ourselves to the endeavour to stop the extension of fictitious votes.

Well, Sir, these are the matters which the Bill contains; but all will feel that it is impossible for me on this occasion to pass by what the Bill does not contain. I am prepared for the complaint that this is not a complete Bill, and for the question—"Why don't you introduce a complete Bill?" On that I have some things to say which appear to me to be of very considerable force; but, at any rate, I will state them; and the first thing I will state is, that there never has been a complete Bill presented to Parliament on this subject of Parliamentary Reform. Never one. I make that assertion in the broadest way. There never has been a complete Bill presented to Parliament. Parliament has never attempted a complete Bill; and, moreover, I will go a little further, and say that Governments and Parliaments would have committed a grievous error in judgment—I might almost say they would have been out of their senses —if they had attempted a complete Bill. There are different points in which a Bill may be complete. Was the Bill of 1831, or the Bill of 1832, a complete Bill? Why, Sir, they touched England alone. And what was England alone at that time? Not greatly more than one-half the United Kingdom. At that time, in 1831, the population of England was under 14,000,000; the population of Scotland and Ireland was over 10,000,000; and Ireland and Scotland were left to the mercy of Parliament, and were not touched by the principle of what is justly called the Great Reform Bill. There was no such thing as a complete Bill on that occasion, and there never has been a complete Bill.

Sir, there are three essential divisions of this great subject; and, if we intend to deal with the subject as practical men, if we are endeavouring to pass a measure, and not to overlay and smother it, we must recognize the limitation which is imposed, not upon our will and choice, but upon our power, by the nature of the case and by the conditions under which Parliamentary government is now carried on. The first of these three great divisions is to define the right of the individual—that is, to fix the franchise. To fix the franchise is of itself an enormous task; it is a question which may be led out, if you should think fit, into a score or scores of ramifications. But it is clearly one of principle—it is, to fix the right of the individual who shall be entitled to vote. The second branch of the question is to provide machinery for the exercise of that right, and that is the subject of registration. It has never been found, as far as I am aware, practicable to unite this vital subject of good registration with the subject of the franchise. The third is, to gather the persons whom Parliament judges to be capable of exercising the franchise with benefit to themselves and to the country into local communities; and that is the business of distribution of seats.

Now, Sir, what do we attempt? I am going, perhaps, to make a confession as to what you may think the nakedness of the land—of the stinted character of the measure; but, looking at these three divisions, we deal only with one, and we deal with that one, not upon exhaustive principles, but with a view to great practical ends, leaving much upon which the critic and the speculator may, if they think fit, exercise their ingenuity in the way of remark, or of complaint. And why is it we should not present a complete Bill? The faculty of authorship is getting very weak, I am afraid, in myself, although many of my Colleagues are not only in the vigour of life, but sufficiently fertile of mind and brain, and I have no doubt that, with our joint authorship, we could have produced a perfectly complete Bill. Why did we not do so? Because, if we had done so, we knew, as well as if the thing had happened, that the Bill must remain a Bill, and would never become an Act. I say this is not a perfect Bill with regard to the franchise. What are the questions we leave out? We do not aim at ideal perfection, and I hope Gentlemen will not force us upon that line; it would be the "Road to Ruin." I have heard that there have been artists and authors who never could satisfy themselves as to the perfection of their picture, or of their diction, as the case may be, and in consequence the picture and the diction have been wasted. I remember a most venerable Archbishop—Archbishop Howley—who, with respect be it spoken, was the worst speaker in the House of Lords. And why? Because he was a man of inferior intellect? He was a man of remarkable intellect, remarkable education, remarkable refinement; but, unfortunately, he had a taste so fastidious that he could never satisfy himself that his terms were perfect and his phrases entirely beyond criticism, and, in consequence of his fastidiousness between the one and the other, catastrophe befel him. No, Sir; ideal perfection is not the true basis of English legislation. We look at the attainable; we look at the practicable; and we have too much of English sense to be drawn away by those sanguine delineations of what might possibly be attained in Utopia, from a path which promises to enable us to effect great good for the people of England. This is not an exhaustive list; but to aim at an ideal franchise might draw in the question of proportional representation, the question of women's suffrage—the question with regard to which my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Bright) has invented a wicked phrase, as he has invented a good many. I call a phrase a wicked phrase when it commits murder, and my right hon. Friend has had the fortune repeatedly to kill a proposal by a phrase. There was once a group of proposals made in a Reform Bill which he at once dubbed "fancy franchises," and by that phrase he killed them all. There is also the question of voting papers; the question of the franchises of the Universities, of the freeman's franchises, of the livery franchise and the burgage franchise; and there is again the principle of whether one man should have more than one vote. There is, in fact, no end to the proposals that might be raised even on the stage of the first of these three great divisions, without touching the other two. Our principle has been to inquire what was practicable; what were the conditions under which we had to move and to act in the present state of Parliament, and of Parliamentary Business. We have heard in former years, and possibly we may hear this year, something about the consequences of deck-loading a ship. We are determined, as far as depends upon us, not to deck-load our Franchise Bill. We consider that we have filled the hold with a good and a sufficient cargo, but the deck-loading of it would be a preliminary to its foundering; and were we with that impression—nay, not merely impression, but with that conviction and knowledge—to encumber our Bill with unnecessary weight, we should be traitors to the cause which we profess to have taken in hand, and we therefore will have nothing to do with giving encouragement to such a policy. As to registration, all I will say is this—that our Bill is framed with the intention of preparing a state of things in which the whole occupation franchise, which, I believe, will be about five-sixths of the franchise, shall be a self-acting franchise, and the labour, anxiety, and expense connected with proof of title, which is, after all, according to our view, the affair of the public and the State rather than of the individual, will, I trust, be got rid of. But, at the same time, our Bill is not a complete Bill in that vital respect, and we look to the introduction of another Bill for the purpose, with which we shall be prepared immediately when the House has supplied us with the basis on which it wishes us to proceed.

I now come to the third of these great problems, and I think the House will not be surprised when I say that, if we find ourselves quite incompetent, consistently with the aims we have in view and with public interests, to deal with the franchise in an exhaustive manner, they will not be surprised when I say that, *à fortiori*, in our opinion it would be absurd for us to attempt to deal in the same measure with what is termed redistribution. This is a question of great importance, and I make no apology for detaining the House upon it. The argument for redistribution was on former occasions never treated by us as a contemptible argument, even when we thought it was far wiser to separate the two subjects—I mean in 1866. There was a strong argument then in favour of uniting redistribution with legislation on the franchise, and it was this—that we had even then sought to keep alive broad and vital distinctions between the county and the town constituencies; and as long as these broad and vital distinctions subsisted, there would have been very great inconvenience in a serious separation between legislation on the franchise and legislation on redistribution. For, of course, by legislation on redistribution two things happen—rural districts that have hitherto been rural districts in law become towns in law; and districts that have hitherto been towns in law, if there be any disfranchisement of however small a constituency, become rural districts in law. Well, in either case, under the law that prevailed before 1866, and under the law which has prevailed since then, there would have been a very large change in the franchise; and, in certain cases, there would have been great disfranchisement inflicted had redistribution been left to be dealt with separately from legislation on the franchise, and at that time our contention was that the best way was to legislate on the franchise, and to follow that legislation at the earliest possible moment with legislation on redistribution. However, that argument was not then successful. But I admit at that time there was a great deal to be said in favour of those who opposed separation. What is to be said in favour of it now? The franchise is not going to be absolutely identical; but it will be within a shade of it. Do not let us conceal that from ourselves. All over the country the occupiers, taken as a whole, will be, if I am right, five-sixths of the whole constituencies. What harm will happen to them supposing you legislate on the franchise now? Supposing, through any accident, which I do not expect, this Parliament is prevented from legislating on redistribution, what would be the worst that could happen? Districts now rural might, in another Parliament, become towns. What would be the difference? They would exercise the same occupying franchise in a town instead of exercising it in a county; and their right to vote in the county in respect of a property franchise from within the town they would retain as they have it under the present law. So, again, when Parliament found it necessary, in any smaller towns, to deprive them of the privilege of returning by their sole power Representatives to Parliament, those persons would still carry the same occupying franchise which they have heretofore had into the county. So that, in fact, that argument has practically vanished.

Now, let me look at the arguments in favour of separating legislation on the franchise and legislation on redistribution. I have said our measure is incomplete, and that there has never been a complete measure. But our measure is complete in one vital respect, in which no measure heretofore presented to Parliament has been complete. It is absolutely complete as to its area. In our opinion there was an imperative necessity for making it complete as to its area. I, for one, should be no party to the responsibility of bringing in on this occasion three separate Bills. All the three countries have a case for enfranchisement arising out of the insufficiency of the present constituencies as compared with what they might be; but of the three the strongest is that of Ireland. I could bear no part in the responsibility of passing, perhaps, a Reform Bill for England, and, perhaps, a Reform Bill for Scotland, and then leaving a Reform Bill for Ireland to take its chance. I do not wish to rest on my own impression of what would happen. But I have noticed the tone of Conservative organs, and the language of those Conservative organs is, in effect, that there may be something to be said for extending the franchise in England and in Scotland, but to extend it in Ireland is madness. [" Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] That is a Conservative organ. That is an indication of what would probably happen, I do not say in this House, but "elsewhere." Under these circumstances, the necessity of a complete measure in point of area is, I would say, absolute, and nothing will induce us to part with the principle. Next, I would ask the House to consider what it is that we ought really to attempt. What has been the effect of uniting redistribution with franchise legislation since 1832? It has been that the redistribution has been of a trivial character, hardly purchasing a postponement of the question, and in reality, and in regard to its broader principles, has simply given the question the go-bye. Some people may be innocent enough to think that our opponents are to be conciliated by uniting redistribution with franchise legislation. We had some experience of that matter in 1866, and we found that, confident and sanguine, and perhaps a little ferocious, as our opponents were before we introduced our Redistribution Bill, when we introduced it their appetites were whetted, became keener than ever, and still more lively was the rush made on every occasion at the unfortunate Bill, until it, and still better the Government which proposed it, were brought to their extinction. In 1867 the number of seats liberated was 38, and they were liberated by a peculiar process, and by leaving a large number of small towns with one Member. We have to face the question, whether places with 3,000, 4,000, or 5,000 inhabitants are to continue to possess the sole power of returning a Representative to Parliament? The uniting of the two descriptions of legislation has resulted formerly in the inefficient handling of redistribution. If redistribution is to be touched at all, it must be touched more broadly.

What will be the effect of introducing a plan of redistribution? It is quite evident we ought to have some regard to what has happened before. There was one effective plan known to Parliament—the plan of 1831-2. What was the effect of that plan? The effect was two-fold—in the first place, it multiplied six-fold the labour of the Reform Bill. In Committee on the Reform Bill there were three nights occupied upon the franchise legislation; 24 nights were occupied on redistribution; and the effect of associating redistribution with legislation on the franchise would be to produce at present a result not very different. More than that, the franchise legislation has opponents who find it difficult to show their colours. Redistribution is their favourite study; but it is impossible not to observe this fact—that of the three political crises produced in connection with Reform legislation, every one has been produced by redistribution, and not one by the franchise. A vote on the redistribution of power brought about the defeat of the first Reform Bill, and it brought about a Dissolution of Parliament. A vote on the redistribution of power brought about the crisis of the year 1832, which was the most serious crisis known to the country since the Revolution of 1688. It was all brought about by the vote of the House of Lords—not upon the franchise, Oh, no!—it was more convenient to deal with the question of redistribution. The crisis of 1866 involved no consequences more serious than the displacement of one Government and the introduction of another Government, which in the following year introduced a Bill establishing the principle of household suffrage. I only refer to it because it comes under the definition of a crisis. To take the two Bills together would be to place on ourselves a multitude of provisions and a complexity of legislation such as we know would make it impracticable for us, under the present condition of Parliamentary Business, to have the smallest hope of passing into law. There is one reason which is not unimportant—a practical reason—and that is that it is quite impossible, until we have the new franchise legislation, to form any just idea of the limits of the new redistribution. That, however, I need not dwell upon; but there is another reason which goes to the root of the matter, and it is this—the union of franchise legislation with redistribution makes a confusion of things that ought to be kept sedulously apart. [An hon. MEMBER: Why?] I will tell you why. The question of the franchise is a large and national one, and ought to be determined upon Imperial considerations. I take it there is no doubt about that. Is redistribution a question that is only determined upon Imperial and national considerations? Of course, the question of redistribution raises up local feeling, and what may be described without offence as a selfish feeling. The effect of that is this—that, where the two measures are mixed together, those who think their local interests are touched by the measures oppose the extension of the franchise for fear of the redistribution which is to follow. The consequence is, that they decide the great Imperial question of the franchise on grounds which are sectional and local, if not selfish. It appears to me that that is a political objection of a very grave description indeed. These reasons seem to me to be more than sufficient to justify and to compel us to decline the responsibility for any measure which should combine redistribution with extension of the franchise.

Now, what do I admit? I admit that legislation on redistribution ought to follow legislation on the franchise at an early date—aye, at the earliest date—and the earliest date will be next Session; and it is for that reason we have brought forward the Franchise Bill of 1884, in order that within the natural life of the present Parliament there may be plenty of time to deal with the question. [*Laughter.*] Of course, I mean if we have the permission of hon. Members opposite. Perhaps you may say—"Tell us your plan." Well, Sir, we do not intend to walk into any trap. And, in my opinion, there can be no greater mistake than for a Government, which is not going to legislate immediately on redistribution, and cannot legislate upon it during the Session, to give its view on the subject.

The only substitute I can offer is a very humble one. I have not the least objection to make a little sketch of my own views upon redistribution; and although I cannot commit my Colleagues absolutely to them, yet I certainly would say this—that I would not submit them if I believed them to be vitally in conflict with any of the opinions they entertain. I need not detain the House long with them, but I will just run through the main features. In the first place, I think, when a measure of redistribution comes, as it may come, I hope, next year, in order that it may have that sort of relative finality to which we ought always to look forward, especially when organic changes are in question, it must be a large measure of redistribution. I do not know whether it need be so large as the measure of 1831, which, of course, effected a wholesale slaughter of nominally existing boroughs and constituencies in this country; but, at any rate, it must be nearer the measure of 1831 than the one of 1867, in order to attain its object. At the same time, I am not personally at all favourable to what is called the system of electoral districts, or to the adoption of any pure population scale. I cannot pretend to have the fear and horror which some people have with regard to the consequences of electoral districts. My objection is a very simple and practical one. In the first place, electoral districts would involve a great deal of unnecessary displacement and disturbance of traditions, which, I think, you ought to respect. But my second objection is—and I regard it as a very important one—that I do not believe that public opinion at all requires it, and I doubt whether it would warrant it. Next I should say that, in a sound measure of redistribution, the distinction between town and country, known to electoral law as borough and shire, ought to be maintained. Although our franchise is nearly identical, that is not the question. The question is, whether there is not in pursuits and associations, and in social circumstances, a difference between town and country, between borough and shire, which it is expedient, becoming, and useful to maintain? Now, Sir, I do not think we ought to have any absolute population scale. I would respect within moderate limits the individuality of constituencies, and I would not attempt to place towns which have had representation for many generations precisely and mathematically upon the footing of towns that have not.

There is another principle to which I would call attention. I am certainly disposed to admit that very large and closely-concentrated populations need not have, and perhaps ought not to have, quite so high a proportional share in the representation of the country as rural and dispersed populations, because the actual political power in these concentrated masses is sharper, quicker, and more vehement. That consideration, of course, would apply most of all to the Metropolis. Another proposition I would lay down is this—I would not reduce the proportional share of representation accorded by the present law to Ireland. In the case of Ireland, as in the case of some other parts of the country, in my opinion some regard ought to be had to relative nearness and distance. Take Scotland, for example —the nearest part of it is 350 miles off, and some parts of it are between 600 and 700 miles off. It is impossible to say that numerical representation meets the case, though I grant it is pretty well made up for by the shrewdness of the men whom Scotland sends; but it is her virtue and good fortune which cause her to make so excellent a choice. Undoubtedly, however, the representation is exercised under greater difficulties, and it is fair that those parts of the country which, like Scotland and Ireland, are separated by great distances, not omitting the element of sea, should be more liberally dealt with in proportion to the Representatives they ought to send. Well, Sir, that is pretty nearly all I have to say, excepting one other proposition which I am disposed to lay down with considerable hesitation, and not as giving a final opinion. Speaking roughly, what will happen will be this. Smaller boroughs, so many of which are in the South of England, must yield seats for London and other great towns, for the counties, and, thirdly, for Scotland and the North of England, which have, perhaps, the largest and most salient of all these claims. The prospect of that operation certainly suggests a proposition, if, under the altered circumstances of Parliament and its increasing Business, Parliament were disposed to entertain it, but which it has not yet favourably entertained, and I think ought not to entertain unless for grave cause, for a limited addition to the number of its Members. I ask no assent of the House to that proposition. All I say is, I do not exclude it from the view of the whole circumstances of the case; and it may be found materially to ease the operation, which is one, taken altogether, of no slight magnitude and difficulty. Finally, when redistribution has come forward, then will be the proper time for considering all the propositions with regard to minority representation and with regard to modes of voting. These very important subjects will have to be fully considered; but I myself see no cause to change the opinion I have always entertained with regard to them. I admit they have claims which ought to receive the full and impartial consideration of Parliament.

Before sitting down I wish to make two appeals. One is an appeal to hon. Gentlemen whom I am afraid I cannot class as Friends, and more particularly to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir John Hay) who has given Notice of the first Amendment. He knows my sentiments on that subject. It is impossible to entertain the question of redistribution at all without including in a measure a liberal enlargement of the number of Members accorded to Scotland. If we are called upon to set aside this Bill to make that assertion, which is totally unnecessary, we may equally well be called upon to make any other assertion. We then come to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins); it is one of those Motions which might be multiplied by the score, and of which it is too obvious the object is to say we will not entertain your Bill, we will not consider it. Then comes the Motion of the hon Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt). That is a distinct refusal. He proposes to the House distinctly to refuse to entertain the subject recommended by the initiative of the Government and the Crown. The House has never taken such a course. The House has, upon very rare occasions indeed, entertained Motions analogous to that of the hon. Gentleman—that is to say, touching the subject-matter even of measures recommended in the Queen's Speech; but that has been extremely rare, and I submit to the House that it is rather hard that after more than 100 persons have been allowed, upon their own authority and recommendation, to bring Bills into the House of Commons without resistance, that the Speech from the Throne on the responsibility of the Government, recommending in the most prominent manner the subject of Parliamentary Reform to the consideration of Parliament, is to be met, for the first time in our history, by an absolute refusal to entertain the subject at all, and by setting up other reasons which, in the opinion of the hon Member, are reasons why the recommendations from the Throne should be contemptuously trodden down. That is my appeal to the opponents of the measure.

But I have the strongest appeal to make to its friends. I entreat them not to endanger the Bill by additions. This Bill is in no danger from direct opposition. It has some danger to encounter from indirect opposition; but of these dangers from indirect opposition, I for one am not afraid, unless they be aggravated by the addition of dangers which it may have to encounter from friendship. For I do not hesitate to say that it is just as possible for friends to destroy the measure by additions which it will not bear, as it is for enemies. If I may presume to tender advice, it is this—Ask yourselves whether the measure is worth having. What does it do, and what does it do in comparison with what has been done before? In 1832 there was passed what was considered a Magna Charta of British liberties; but that Magna Charta of British liberties added, according to the previous estimate of Lord John Russell, 500,000, while according to the results considerably less than 500,000 were added, to the entire constituency of the three countries. After 1832 we come to 1866. At that time the total constituency of the United Kingdom reached 1,364,000. By the Bills which were passed between 1867 and 1869 that number was raised to 2,448,000. And now, Sir, under the action of the present law the constituency has reached in round numbers what I would call 3,000,000. I will not enter into details; but what is the increase we are going to make? There is a basis of computation; but it is a basis which affords, I admit, ground for conjecture and opinion. That basis of computation is the present ratio in towns, between inhabited houses and the number of town electors. Of course, we have availed ourselves of that basis for the purpose of computation. I have gone into the matter as carefully as I can, and the best results I can attain are these. The Bill, if it passes as presented, will add to the English constituency over 1,300,000 persons. It will add to the Scotch consistency, Scotland being at present rather better provided for in this respect than either of the other countries, over 200,000, and to the Irish constituency over 400,000; or, in the main, to the present aggregate constituency of the United Kingdom taken at 3,000,000, it will add 2,000,000 more, nearly twice as much as was added since 1867, and more than four times as much as was added in 1832. Surely, I say, that is worth doing, that is worth not endangering. Surely that is worth some sacrifice.

This is a measure with results such as I have ventured to sketch them that ought to bring home to the mind of every man favourable to the extension of popular liberty, the solemn question what course he is to pursue in regard to it. I hope the House will look at it as the Liberal Party in 1831 looked at the Reform Bill of that date, and determined that they would waive criticism of minute details, that they would waive particular preferences and predilections, and would look at the broad scope and general effect of the measure. Do that upon this occasion. It is a Bill worth having; and if it is worth having, again I say it is a Bill worth your not endangering. Let us enter into no bye-ways which would lead us off the path marked out straight before us; let us not wander on the hill-tops of speculation; let us not wander into the morasses and fogs of doubt. We are firm in the faith that enfranchisement is a good, that the people may be trusted—that the voters under the Constitution are the strength of the Constitution. What we want in order to carry this Bill, considering as I fully believe that the very large majority of this country are favourable to its principle—what we want in order to carry it is union and union only. What will endanger it is disunion and disunion only. Let us hold firmly together and success will crown our effort. You will, as much as any former Parliament that has conferred great legislative benefits on the nation, have your reward, and

"Read your history in a nation's eyes,"

for you will have deserved it by the benefits you will have conferred. You will have made this strong nation stronger still; stronger by its closer union without; stronger against its foes, if and when it has any foes without; stronger within by union between class and class, and by arraying all classes and all portions of the community in one solid compacted mass round the ancient Throne which it has loved so well, and round a Constitution now to be more than ever powerful, and more than ever free.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR JOHN HAY, in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That no Bill to amend the Representation of the People of the United Kingdom will be satisfactory which does not provide an increased number of representatives for the Kingdom of Scotland up to the full measure which justice demands, according to population and the share of revenue which it contributes,"

said, that after the eloquent and ingenious speech—full of eloquence and fire—to which they had just listened, and after the appeal the right. hon. Gentleman made to him, he felt some diffidence in speaking on his Motion. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman's proposition for the extension of the franchise, and did not intend to controvert any of the provisions he had introduced to the House for the benefit of the counties. What the right hon. Gentleman had stated, however, in regard to the means by which the representation of Scotland was to be increased, was, to his mind, extremely unsatisfactory. The statement that the same franchise would be extended generally to the United Kingdom he hailed with satisfaction. He had never been one of those who thought that, in consequence of the agitation which had lately prevailed in the Sister Island, it would be right that Ireland should be excluded from the franchise which was given to England and Scotland. He was glad, therefore, to hear that there was to be uniformity. But he confessed when he heard the statement that the increase of the Representatives of Scotland was to be derived from the proposition that the Members of the House should be increased, he felt that such a proposition, although only for the moment suggested, and as a mere idea passing through the brain of the Prime Minister, was not one that would commend itself to the country or to this House. Believing, as he did, that it was for the advantage of the Three Kingdoms that there should be identity of franchise, he thought there should be identity of representation. If the House would allow him to draw attention to the subject, he hoped to show that the proposition which the Prime Minister had indicated was not entirely satisfactory. Although the Prime Minister had stated that it would be disadvantageous to over-burden the ship he was endeavouring to pilot with redistribution, yet it was absolutely certain that the House and the country would expect that that measure of redistribution, if not brought forward *pari passu,* should at least be in their hands before the second reading of this Bill. Having listened to the eloquent words of the Prime Minister which he had just addressed to the House, he should quote the right hon. Gentleman's own words on this particular subject. Speaking in the North in November, 1879, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It is my opinion that Scotland is not represented in the Imperial Parliament up to the full measure which justice demands."

A voice in the crowd then asked—"Whose fault is that?" And the right hon. Gentleman proceeded—

> "I will tell you in a minute. If Scotland were represented according to population it would, instead of 60 Members, possess 70. If represented according to the share of Revenue it contributes, it would, instead of 60, have 78 Members. I am sorry that my friend asked me whose fault it was, for I had no intention of making any charge against the Members of the present Government."

This was in 1879.

> "But it is the fault of those who framed and carried the Reform Bills of 1867 and 1868 in such a manner as not to afford to Scotland a fair share of representation."

These words of the Prime Minister seemed to him to meet the contention which had been submitted, that redistribution ought not to be considered in the same Session as a Bill for the extension of the representation of the people. He referred Scotch Members to the proposition which the right hon. Gentleman had just made in such eloquent terms—that the Members be increased beyond 652 by the number which would give increased representation to Scotland; or that the increased representation should be taken, not from Ireland, which at the present moment was over-represented, but from England, which, looking to its population and wealth, was under-represented, although not to the same extent as Scotland. Neither of those alternatives was likely to be accepted by a British House of Commons. The condition of matters was shown by the Census of 1881, that the population of England was 25,968,000, say 26,000,000; of Ireland, 5,159,000; while, according to the authority of an Irish Member, it was now even under 5,000,000. Scotland had a population of 3,734,000. There were 489 English and Welsh Members, 103 Irish Members, 60 Scotch Members. In England each Member represented 53,000 persons; in Ireland each Member represented 50,000 persons; and in Scotland each Member represented 62,000 persons. Thus, in point of population, Scotland had a fair claim for additional representation. As to the valuation, the valuation of England and Wales was £158,000,000; Ireland, £13,639,000; and Scotland, £22,000,000; so that each English and Welsh Member represented £323,000; each Irish Member, £132,000; and each Scotch Member, £371,000. Taking Excise and the Property Tax, England and Wales gave £26,000,000; Scotland, £5,000,000; Ireland, £4,000,000; and under Schedule D, the figures were —England, £193,000,000; Scotland, £23,000,000; Ireland, £8,000,000. The figures he had given showed that the amount of representation enjoyed by Scotland was far below what it had a fair right to expect. He thought it most unsatisfactory to suggest that, this position being admitted, Members should be taken from England to make up the number of Members which Scotland could justly claim; or that the representation of Ireland was so much in excess of the population and wealth of the country. The Returns on the subject for the year 1882 showed that in Ireland there were 500,000 persons receiving relief from the poor rate; whereas in Scotland the number was only 92,000, of whom, at least, a third were Irish. His view was that in this matter of representation the present Bill ought to run on the lines of the Bills of 1832 and 1867, and that now, as then, the smaller constituencies ought to give up a part of their representation in order that justice might be done to the larger ones; the claim of Scotland to an increased representation being admitted now, as it was at the former periods to which he had referred. So important did he think this branch of the subject that he should urge on Scotch Members not to assent to the second reading of the Bill until they had before them a statement of the form in which the representation of the Scottish people was to be increased in a proportion compatible with the increased wealth and population of the country. He had intended to allude to various matters which had been referred to by the Prime Minister; but he might say he was very well satisfied with the statement the right hon. Gentleman had made. Discussion on details had better be taken in Committee than on the second reading of the Bill, and, therefore, it would be unfair to detain the House; but he was bound to say that the Prime Minister seemed to appeal to his more immediate followers for approbation with regard to the extension of the franchise to the working classes. He would remind the House that no one had urged such an increase more than did the late Lord Beaconsfield, to whose memory and to those remaining Members of the House who agreed with him credit should be given. He had hoped when the right hon. Gentleman expressed himself in favour of better representation for Scotland that he would have gone on to propose the transfer to Scotland of the 16 seats where the Writs were now suspended for corrupt practices. The right hon. Gentleman, as a Scotch Member, might fairly have made that proposition, by means of which he would have at once fulfilled his Mid Lothian promise, and relieved himself of much trouble in his Redistribution Bill. No one could with justice contend that the population of England and Wales were now too largely represented, and that they could, therefore, afford to make sacrifices in order that Scotland might have more Members accorded to it. Lancashire, for instance, had a population almost equal to that of Scotland, but it had only 32 Members; and Middlesex, with a population of very nearly 3,000,000, had only 19 Representatives. It was impossible to expect that that or any other Parliament in which the large majority of the Members were English would allow Ireland to retain the unfairly large number of Members she now had, seeing that England and Wales were now under-represented. In England and Wales there were 56, and in Ireland 10 represented boroughs having a population of under 10,000, while there were no such boroughs in Scotland. In England and Wales there were 48, and in Ireland three, boroughs having a population under 50,000, and returning two Members each, while there were no such boroughs in Scotland. In England and Wales there were 181, and in Scotland 12 unrepresented towns, with a population of over 10,000 each, whose voters would be thrown by this Bill into the county constituencies, while in Ireland there were no such towns. In England and Wales there were six towns having a population of over 50,000, and one having a population of 137,000, who would be thrown into the county constituencies. The Prime Minister said that it was not desirable to mix these two classes of voters, and in that he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. But if the franchise were extended, those small towns should receive a proper amount of representation, and it would be convenient to know whence it was to come. He thought Parliament ought to insist, when giving Ireland uniformity of franchise, upon giving her also uniformity of representation. There was no sound reason why small Irish towns should send Representatives to Parliament, while similar towns in Great Britain were totally without representation. Scotch Members should take care that some definite promise was given with regard to representation in Scotland, and that some compromise was arrived at, as he did not believe that the House or the country would assent to an increase in the number of Members of Parliament. He considered it advisable that with regard to the small English towns some system of grouping — similar to that which prevailed in Scotland—should be adopted, in order to secure efficient representation; for if the populations of such towns were thrown into the counties, the effect, in many instances, would be to almost nullify the county vote, and make the county Member the Representative of a concentrated population. Let them take a case or two as illustrations of what would occur if the town population was thrown into its respective counties. The borough of Macclesfield was deprived of its Representatives for corrupt practices. It had a population of 37,260, with 5,486 household votes. East Cheshire, in which it was, had 104,983 population, and 7,071 votes under the present franchise; but with the extension of the franchise East Cheshire might expect to have 12,659 votes, which, added to Macclesfield, would give 18,145. Macclesfield would have one-third of the voting power, and, concentrated as town voters were when compared to rural districts, would return the Members for East Cheshire. Let them take Gloucester. That city had 36,521 population, and 5,721 votes. East Gloucestershire, population 88,541, and 8,861 votes; with household franchise this would be increased to 16,068 votes, which, added to Gloucester City gave 21,789; so that one-fourth of the voting power was conferred on the city. Take Oxford City, population 40,387, votes 6,306; the county, 121,942 population, votes 7,664. Under household franchise, the shire, 18,870 votes; the city, 6,306; total, 25,176 votes, or one-fourth in the city of Oxford. It therefore seemed to him desirable that a scheme of redistribution should be considered fully and fairly with the extension of the franchise. At the present time, England and Wales were represented by 493 Members, but, on the ground of population alone, they should have 491 Members; while, if population and revenue were considered, they were entitled to 502 Members. Ireland had 105 Members, but on the ground of population she was entitled to 89 only, while on that of population and revenue combined she could claim only 78. Scotland, however, which was represented by 60 Members, had a right to 71 by reason of her population alone, and to 78 when population and revenue were taken together. These Members could not be taken from England and Wales, but they could be taken from Ireland, if population and revenue were to be recognized as the basis of representation. At the time when they were about to give to the Irish people their full franchise, it was absurd to say that they ought to continue to send to Westminster a number of Members largely in excess of that to which they were fairly entitled. With regard to Scotland, it appeared to him that if the counties and the Universities were left as at present, the representation of the eight large towns ought to be increased to 16 Members. He felt sure that the Government would be wise to indicate more clearly to Scotland how her representation was to be increased. He felt certain that no British House of Commons would ever consent to reduce the number of Members for England and Wales. The number of additional Members required for England, Wales, and Scotland, in his opinion, ought to be obtained by lessening the superabundance of representation in Ireland, which, with a population of under 5,000,000, returned 105 Members to the Imperial Parliament. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman concluded by moving his Amendment.

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Bill to amend the Representation of the People of the United Kingdom will be satisfactory which does not provide an increased number of representatives for the Kingdom of Scotland up to the full measure which justice demands, according to population and the share of revenue which it contributes,"—(*Admiral Sir John Hay,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. SALT, who had on the Paper the following Amendment:—

"That it is not desirable to introduce great changes in the Representative system of the Country, the results of which it may be difficult to foresee, whilst the position of affairs in Egypt are a source of alarm and anxiety, and whilst a rigid Coercion Act is necessary to secure the tranquillity of Ireland,"

said: I was anxious to rise early, since, unfortunately, I was out of the House when I understand the Prime Minister administered a rebuke to me because of the Amendment I have placed upon the Paper. That rebuke he administered on two grounds. First of all, because he said it was unusual to move an Amendment upon the introduction of a Bill that has been mentioned in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech; and, secondly, on the more general grounds that it is undesirable that an Amendment should be moved at this stage of a very important measure. I think I can find answers very readily. First, I may say that since Her Majesty's Speech was delivered on the 5th of February many important events have taken place. The state of affairs in Egypt has entirely changed. So far as might be, the words in the Queen's Speech with regard to Egypt were no doubt anxious, but were generally congratulatory as to the achievement of some degree of success. But since that time many events have occurred. Armies have been massacred, troops have been in rebellion, and the country that is by nature and experience the greatest Administrator in the East has failed altogether in her hold of Egypt. Therefore, I say, if the march of events which has altogether changed since the time that Her Majesty's Speech was delivered justified in any sense an alteration from the usual courtesy and custom of Parliament, the events that have taken place offer a double or treble justification for me now. But something is to be said about the character of the measure introduced to-night. I grant that it is somewhat unusual at the introduction of such a measure to move a Motion which appears to be in opposition to its introduction; but here, again, I would say the circumstances of the time render the introduction of a measure of such importance wholly unusual. Instead of discussing a Reform Bill at this moment, we ought, according to the Rules of Parliament for years past, to be discussing the Supplementary Estimates, or a Vote of Credit for military operations. Therefore, I say, on that ground too, a departure from the custom and courtesy of Parliament is amply justified. But I have ventured to put this Motion on the Paper for yet another reason, and that is to express my own opinion, and which I may fairly urge at this stage. I believe—I honestly believe—that it not only expresses my own opinion, but the earnest opinion of a large number of thoughtful men throughout the country. Yet if this affords any consolation to the right hon. Gentleman, or his supporters, I may say that I do not think it is a Motion which I ought out of courtesy to the House to press to a Division; indeed, I doubt whether, according to the Rules of Debate, the Motion of my right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay) preceding mine, I could proceed to a Division, even if I wished to do so. My position is this—that I protest against the introduction of a measure of this kind; and, consequently, I protest also against the Amendment of my right hon. and gallant Friend. When great Constitutional changes have to be considered in this country, there are two points that have to be weighed. First of all, there is the method of the change; and, secondly, there is the opportunity for the change. As to the method of the change, I will say nothing at all to-night. There will be ample opportunity — many opportunities — of discussing the method of the changes proposed to be made; but what I want to urge to-night is that the opportunity is neither suitable nor advantageous to the country. In urging that point alone, it is of necessity that I should be brief. First of all, the arguments in support of the view I hold so strongly are simple and few; and, secondly, the illustrations and circumstances by which I shall support that argument are such that if I were to follow them out fully I should be carried into a discussion that must be reserved for another time. The measure which is proposed to us is a very great one. We have heard what has been said by the Prime Minister to-night—that time is necessary to think over the effect of the changes he proposes; but we have it on the highest authority—the authority of a Cabinet Minister trusted by his fellows, of great experience, of great position in the present Ministry—the words of a Cabinet Minister —words spoken not privately, but openly before England and before the world—that the Government is about to make the greatest reform since 1685. Those reforms, I grant you, may be very good, or they may not be very good; but what I contend is this—that whether they are good or not good, we have to consider carefully that the opportunity for discussing such changes is in a political calm, when they can receive serious and proper consideration. The history of the past half-century throws some light, I think, on the view I take, or at least I may claim, perhaps, some illustration of my opinion from the events of the past. In 1785, Mr. Pitt introduced a Reform Bill, but that Bill was not carried. Mr. Pitt was a strong and able Minister, of determined character and of Liberal as well as Conservative opinions; but this question of Reform was not touched for years and years after—I believe I am correct in saying it was not discussed until after the Peace of 1815. And why? The answer is obvious and plain in the history of the country that during 25 years this country and Europe were engaged in the greatest difficulties Europe has ever known. These difficulties, these dangers both at home and abroad, required all the thought, and activity, and energy of the Ministry of the day, instead of spending the time in mere Constitutional reforms. But there is another illustration I may refer to. In 1832, we have been reminded to-night, the great Reform Bill was passed. Many discussions originated by private Members took place in the House during the succeeding 20 years; but in 1852 the question of the Reform of the Representation of the People became again a Government measure. There was a Reform Bill introduced in 1852, and another in 1854; but there was a pause between 1854 and 1858; and why? Well, the history of the country will tell you the reason why there was that pause. Between 1854 and 1858 two great foreign events occurred in the history of this country—the Crimean War and the Mutiny in India. Great events they were, that demanded the whole care and attention of the Government; therefore, I say, take this illustration in the history of our country as bearing on the attempt to introduce a great Constitutional change, and there is the theory to which I beg to draw the attention of the House. I am making no attack on the policy of the Government. I accept for the moment for my argument the policy and action of the Government as the policy and action of the country. I complain of nothing they are proposing to-day; but what I wish to put before the House is this—that a great Reform Bill is a matter for quiet, sound, business-like argument, and this is not the time for a great Constitutional change. What are the circumstances of the present time? I can turn to a document of the highest authority and of recent publication: I mean the Speech from the Throne on February 5. Now, reading Her Majesty's Speech, I was struck with this—that never had I read a document in my life anywhere so suggestive of disturbance, anxiety, and discomfort. It underlies every sentence, every line of the Speech—suspicion, fear, and mystic dread of something in the future. Take Madagascar. Is the story of Madagascar satisfactory either to the mercantile interests or the national honour? There is the Congo mentioned. Are affairs on the Congo such as to satisfy a country that desires to drive its commerce into every part of the world? There are negotiations for Treaties of Commerce mentioned. Treaties of Commerce may be good things; but I do not know that they have always been altogether satisfactory. Already we see the Treaty with Turkey mentioned in the newspapers with doubt, for there we are told the Anglo-Turkish Convention is under consideration with certain reservations. Well, we know when a Treaty of Commerce is under consideration what certain reservations mean. Then there is the Transvaal mentioned. Is that a subject without serious anxiety——

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I rise to Order, Sir, and respectfully ask your opinion. Have the hon. Member's observations any connection with the Motion or the Amendment before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I see no reason yet to interpose between the hon. Member and the House.

Mr. SALT: The hon. Member was not in the House when I began; and I think if he had been, instead of indulging his comfort outside, he would have heard the point I took. It is this, and perfectly clear and distinct—that I protest both against the Motion and the Amendment on the simplest of all grounds—that the time, in the interest of the country, is not opportune for the Bill and the Motion; therefore, I am perfectly in Order. But if it will be any comfort to the hon. Member, I may say I must from necessity and the nature of the subject be very brief, and in two minutes I shall sit down. There is also Basutoland. These were all matters of anxiety—were matters which were mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and which demanded the earliest attention of the Government—an attention so earnest, that this was not the time for great changes. I have alluded in my Notice especially to Egypt and Ireland. What is the position of Egypt? The position of Egypt after the bombardment of Alexandria and the storming of Tel-el-Kebir was that the English Government were triumphant and dominant, and by accepting that position they undertook, willingly or unwillingly, certain great duties. The question I have to ask is—How have those duties been fulfilled? They undertook duties to this country that its interests in Egypt were properly secured. They undertook to Europe, which acquiesced in our peculiar position there, that we would maintain peace and order and a highway for commercial transactions. They undertook towards France—who had entered into the Dual Control with us—that we would maintain the authority which Dual Control exercised. We undertook that in a Mahommedan country we would at least maintain order and justice, and we undertook to the Christian population and to the fellaheen that we would prevent, as far as possible, oppression, bloodshed, and war. Have those duties been carried out? Is there no cause now for anxiety? One of the most recent reports from Vienna says that the leading newspapers speak in terms of utter compassion of the spectacle offered by Great Britain at the present moment. While Russia without a shot was able to annex Provinces bringing her nearer to our Indian Empire, England allows garrisons to be massacred under her own eyes, and comes to terms with the Mahdi, who is justified in boasting that the British Empire is powerless to defeat him. I am not going to enter into an Egyptian debate; but what I have a right to say, and do say, in the most emphatic manner, is this—that I have said enough to show that the attention of the Government ought to be turned towards Egypt, instead of being taken up by a great Constitutional change, which, however good it may be, might as well be deferred to another year. I need not say very much about Ireland. Is Ireland really happy and contented under your Coercion Bill? We know what has been said in this House. We know the terms of hatred and hostility to this country that have been used over and over again by men who are Members of this House, and bound by their position and their Oath to be honourable not only to the particular part of the Empire in which they live, but to the Empire at large. Is that a satisfactory state of affairs? Is it a state of affairs in which it is either prudent or safe to undertake great administrative changes? No, Sir. I wish to protest against Parliament entering into an enormous Constitutional reform, of which we cannot see the end, at a time when the country is in a condition of anxiety both at home and abroad. I hope the Government may be induced, in the interests of the commerce of the country, for the credit of the country, and for the honour of the British name, to bring to Egypt order, justice, firmness, and real government, and to bring about a state of affairs which will lead ultimately to its prosperity; and, as regards Ireland, to bring her back at least to the condition she was in in 1880, when there was then an absence of crime and outrage, and a general sense of comfort and satisfaction such as had been unknown in the previous history of that country.

MR. ANDERSON said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had endeavoured to convince the House and the country that because, at an earlier period of our history, such serious events as the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny were considered sufficient reasons for postponing a great measure, such affairs as Madagascar, the Congo, and Basutoland were now to be considered sufficient reasons for postponing a great reform which the country had been so long waiting for. The hon. Member's speech had been addressed to an Amendment which had not been before the House, and which the hon. Member could not move. He never said a word on the Amendment before the House, and he (Mr. Anderson), therefore, rose to say a few words about the Amendment properly under consideration. The right hon. and gallant Baronet who moved the Amendment before the House had furnished the first illustration of the Prime Minister's remarks that it would not be this Bill that would excite opposition, at least open opposition; but it would be the redistribution scheme, when it came on, that the Opposition would gather round. The right hon.

and gallant Baronet's speech was highly appreciative of the Bill, for he spoke of how he had always advocated such a Bill, and was ready to support it when brought forward by a responsible Ministry. He was very glad to hear that statement from the right hon. and gallant Baronet as a Scotch Member from the opposite side of the House, and he earnestly hoped other Scotch Members on the opposite side would follow the example that had been set them. The speech of the right hon. and gallant Baronet was directed mainly to the redistribution of seats that was shadowed forth by the Prime Minister in the most guarded manner. The Prime Minister said it was only his own opinion he was expressing, and not that of his Colleagues; but he (Mr. Anderson) was content to take that guarded promise of the Prime Minister of a considerable accession to the Members for Scotland, and not to make any difficulty or press for any more pointed answer now. He would even make an admission to the right hon. and gallant Baronet. There was a great deal in the scheme, as presented by the Prime Minister, of which he did not approve, and which he would be ready to oppose when the time came; but not now. When it came before them he would be ready to move, and to claim for Scotland a large accession to her Members, at any rate, as large as justice seemed to require; but he did not agree with the right hon. and gallant Baronet in his estimate, nor did he believe that the Revenue ought to have anything whatever to do with the question. So far as population went, he believed in his estimate. If they kept to population, England was somewhat over-represented; Ireland was also somewhat over-represented by population, but not very largely, and perhaps not at all if they admitted the element mentioned by the Prime Minister of distance from the Central Authority. If that were admitted, then probably Ireland was not over-represented; but if that were admitted for Ireland, it would have to be admitted for Scotland also, and that would give Scotland a right to a little more representation than mere population would justify. Having said so much about redistribution, he would confine himself now to the Bill to be introduced, and he must congratulate the Prime Minister, and he had pleasure in being the first Member to do so, upon having offered the House a really great measure. A Bill to enfranchise no less than 2,000,000 could not be described as other than a great measure; but when that was only an estimate, and an uncertain one, he thought it was an admirable reason for putting off the redistribution scheme to a future date, until they knew what the reality was in the increase in the representation, and not a mere estimate, however near that estimate might prove to be. The Prime Minister had mentioned the shipbuilding industry on the Clyde as one of the greatest arguments in favour of extended franchise. As the shipbuilding yards had been obliged to move further down the Clyde from Glasgow the workpeople had gone with the work, and by doing that many of them had lost the franchise which they actually had before. There could not be any greater injustice; and he could assure the Prime Minister that the Bill which he now offered would be hailed with satisfaction on the Clyde, and he thought generally by the Scotch Members, and when the redistribution scheme came they would be ready to discuss that; but, in the meantime, he hoped the Scotch Liberal Members would confine themselves to the Bill before the House.

Mr. GIBSON said, he thought it must have been present to the mind of everyone who had listened to the Prime Minister's very elaborate and carefully arranged speech that he was conscious of opening to the House and country a measure of stupendous dimensions; but that, at the same time, he was fully conscious that the Bill was one that would challenge great difference of opinion, even among his own Friends, and that it conveyed to everyone on his (Mr. Gibson's) side of the House the impression that he was speaking the sentiments of a divided Cabinet. It was the lot of the Prime Minister 18 years ago to introduce a Reform Bill of considerable importance, and which met with a fate which he thought would, to a certain extent, determine the fate of the Ministry on the present occasion. On that occasion the Prime Minister himself, in his opening statement, indicated that he was disregarding the opinion of the country, and he used the following remarkable words:—

> "A state of the public mind that was not clear, definite, and resolute, but rather bewildered, or at the least indecisive."—(3 *Hansard*, [182] 21.)

Those words might be used with substantial advantage on the present occasion. At the present time, when the Prime Minister endeavoured to infuse interest into the subject, he knew he was speaking, if not to an indifferent House, certainly not to an enthusiastic one; and he knew that the temper of the country at the present moment was one, if not of absolute indifference, at least as nearly approaching to one of indifference as could be conceived. The topics that were at the present time most prominent in the public mind were the fate of our forces near Suakim, and the prospect of the Bill for the protection of our flocks and herds from imported disease. The nation had obviously shown little interest in the question before the House. If the votes of the Ministers themselves were taken by ballot it would be found that only a very small minority of them were at all enthusiastic about the matter. According to the avowal of the Prime Minister himself the measure was introduced because the Members of the Government were martyrs to old votes. He did not say that the Government had brought in the Bill without hope; but their hope was poor and unworthy. They had brought it in in the hope of drawing the attention of the people away from their failures and disasters elsewhere; but they hoped in vain. Judging from the speech of the Prime Minister, one would think that the present Parliament was a Parliament summoned to deal with the subject of Electoral Reform. He denied that it was summoned for any such purpose. In none of the electoral utterances of the responsible Ministers of the Crown were there any words to show that that was one of the principle questions which this Parliament was expected to settle. In an eloquent election address, of reasonable duration, the only allusion made by the Prime Minister to the present vast measure was that "there might be a more equal distribution of the electoral franchise." The only reference to the subject in hand made by the noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) in his election addresses was "that the system of public representation in Parliament was still incomplete." Could such utterances as those be said to show that the present Parliament was returned with a mandate from the nation to consider the subject of Reform? It was the duty of the Opposition to examine at such length and in such manner as they should think concientiously right the character and the details of the measure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose language was generally moderate, had stated that the Bill involved greater changes and reforms than any which had taken place since 1689, and the Prime Minister had that evening used words which showed that he did not shrink from adopting that description of the measure. It was extraordinary that the House of Commons should be asked to consider this great organic change without being put in possession of statistics showing what would be the probable effect of the proposed enlarged franchise. At present the Government seemed to rely on statistics furnished by private Members, for which they were not responsible, and which they could either disclaim or supplement. In 1832 and 1866 ample Returns were laid before Parliament showing, *inter alia*, the number of those who would be enfranchised, where they resided, and the classes to which they belonged. The present proposal was one whose principle and the groundwork of whose plans had been tossed off lightly by the Prime Minister. Towards the end of his speech he said he would enfranchise 2,000,000. ["Hear, hear!"] Perhaps hon. Members opposite would cheer again when he told them that the Prime Minister was under the mark. ["Hear, hear!"] In dealing with England and Scotland the Prime Minister gave substantial figures; but in dealing with Ireland he stated that he contemplated the enfranchisement of 400,000 persons. According, however, to his (Mr. Gibson's) view that estimate was distinctly and largely under the mark, and he believed it would be over 500,000, and might be not far short of 600,000. He noticed that certain Members below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House cheered that statement; but he did not see any Irish Liberal Member joining in the general hilarity. He saw many difficulties with reference to the County Franchise in presuming an analogy between the class of lodgers in the county and the class of lodgers in the towns, and the Service Franchise, while it might have many things to commend it, would create many intricate and difficult questions. The Prime Minister's speech had one great characteristic; it told them a great deal upon points on which they wanted very little elucidation, and left them absolutely in the dark on many points on which, he thought, they had a right to some guidance. Would the Bill, if it passed in any form, give them a better House of Commons? He did not find that the Prime Minister undertook to suggest that it would. Would it make the legislative machine work more smoothly than at present? Would it simplify the Irish problem? He should be glad to hear any Member who might take part in the discussion explain how. Would it lessen or would it intensify electoral anomalies? Why—even after the Prime Minister's speech—could any man believe that he himself imagined if the present Bill passed it could effect a settlement of the Reform Question for even a period of five years? The right hon. Gentleman had not said one solitary syllable about the principle upon which this Bill was supposed to rest. It was not to rest on the old well-known principle of the Constitution—that representation and taxation should go together. And yet the Prime Minister, with all his splendid courage, would not venture to declare that the Bill would divorce representation from taxation. The right hon. Gentleman had not rested the Bill on the assertion that the franchise was a right. The only approach to a principle he could find in the right hon. Gentleman's speech was what, if said by anyone else, he would call a platitude of the Caucus, but in this case he ventured to leave unbaptized—that it rested upon the broad basis of the enfranchisement of capable citizens, and the more the better. Was that a principle ever before suggested in any Reform debate as a grave, well-considered ground for a most important change in the Constitution? The Prime Minister was a Nestor in Parliament, and had spoken in more Reform debates than any other living man; and yet he (Mr. Gibson) would venture to say that the words he had quoted would be found absolutely inconsistent, not only with every other speech, but with the tendency of every other speech, on previous Reform Bills. No doubt as to capable citizens, the question would be asked over and over again—Will you deny their fitness?" He admitted, as everyone must admit, that many—he believed the majority—of those proposed to be enfranchised were as fit as thousands of those who already had the franchise. He would go further, and say just as fit as thousands who would be left outside the present Bill. Why, the Bill would exaggerate and develope inequalities and anomalies, because there must be left rankling discontent in the hundreds and thousands of men—honest, temperate, capable, and fit—who were fortunately free from the encumbrance of a house. The argument of the Prime Minister prove infinitely too much. It proved that it was right to give the franchise to every man with a house; but every man without a house, although fully qualified in other respects, was not said to be capable of the franchise. There were two branches of the question that the House, from beginning to end of the Premier's speech, waited for something like a clear reference to. Everyone knew from the spokesman of the Cabinet that the Prime Minister was going to bring in a Bill; but what the people of the country wanted to know was, how far the Bill would deal with the great and vital questions of minority representation and redistribution? On the minority question the right hon. Gentleman only revealed one thing—that the Cabinet were not agreed, because he was only able to indicate that whenever the subject was presented it would meet with candid consideration. So that on this question of minorities all that the House got from the Prime Minister was a statement meaning anything or nothing. Had not the House a right to something like a decent frankness on this question? The Prime Minister had passed by what had attracted the attention of the most thoughtful minds in the country—the question of proportionate representation. Everyone going to take part in these debates had no doubt read the literature connected with the subject. They all knew Mr. Hare's plan—a very interesting one—as to which opinions might largely differ; and there were other plans. He gave no opinion on Mr. Hare's plan, or on the other arithmetical proposals suggested. But he would say that the Prime Minister was keeping back the opinion of the Cabinet on the question, seeing that he had not ventured on the slightest word about it. There was another matter as to which the Government were challenged over and over again to express their views. Did they intend in the large increase that must take place in the representation of great centres of population places—like London, Birmingham, and Manchester, where nine or ten Members might take the place of three or four—that each citizen in those great cities should have as many votes as there would be seats; or did they intend to regulate the sub-division of those great centres so that each man would only be able to vote for one, two, or three candidates? These were vital questions, and he believed that both the House and the country would insist that the Government should no longer keep them in ignorance as to their views with regard to them. The House and the country had not been treated fairly; and he could not but think that the Nemesis which ever attended practices not consistent with the fair play which should always be shown in public life would sooner or later overtake the Government. There was another branch of this great question to which public attention had been directed more than to any other—he meant the question of redistribution. He was not sure that any one calmly considering this matter would not arrive at the conclusion that redistribution was a far more urgent and pressing question than the question of the franchise. It would be found that in the great mass of the speeches delivered in the country—those of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) as well as of the Prime Minister—the arguments used went really more in favour of redistribution than of the representation of the people. This was a question which affected not only the agricultural labourer but the artizans dwelling in important towns, who might be admitted to the franchise by redistribution when more Members were given to important towns or by the system of grouping. Such a plan would go far to cure all the anomalies which had been pointed out. How had the Prime Minister dealt with the question of redistribution? He had listened to him with mixed feelings—of course with admiration, that went without saying, and he listened to him with great curiosity; and he was bound to say that when that admiration and curiosity assumed more moderate limits, he listened to him with feelings of intense disappointment. He had never in his life listened to arguments that were less conclusive. He never heard the Prime Minister use arguments that were more entirely feeble than those he had presented to the House, and through the House to the country, in support of the extraordinary course he proposed to take in reference to redistribution. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to postpone redistribution until God knows when. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members might murmur; but he was content to rely upon the silence of the Prime Minister with regard to that point. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to postpone re-distribution, not only until after the Franchise Bill became law—which was a very remote day—but also until after a Registration Bill was brought in and passed. That Registration Bill was to do more than any other had yet done, and that was to accomplish registration by some self-acting process. He therefore felt that he was entitled to show that the Prime Minister was literally playing with the House in reference to this question. It was perfectly plain that in reference to this question the Cabinet were not united; because if their conduct were united it was both uncandid and unfair. He had full justification for what he was saying, for he found that when the Prime Minister spoke in reference to this question he made an astounding assertion for a Prime Minister to make who was worshipped by his Cabinet. ["Oh!" *and signs of disapprobation from* Mr. GLADSTONE.] He would withdraw that statement, as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to know that there were some dissentients. It was, however, remarkable that when he came to speak upon this question—he being the Prime Minister of England, with great authority and experience—he had to say that he was not speaking for the Cabinet and the Government, and that he was giving, not his own plan, not his own deliberate opinion, but a sketch of what he conceived might hereafter be carried out.

It proved to be a very curious sketch—a sketch coloured with more method he had never seen in his life. England was known to be the most Conservative part of the Three Kingdoms. Accordingly, it was suggested that Ireland was to be left with its present representation, and that Scotland was to be increased. Nothing was said about Wales for obvious reasons; but England was to supply whatever increase was to be given to Scotland; and inasmuch as the South of England was known to be rather more Conservative than the North, it was from the South of England it was to be taken to supply the difference. He, of course, believed implicitly in the Prime Minister's conscience. [Mr. WARTON: Oh, oh!] Well, he might be credulous — [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!]; but he was confident that when the Prime Minister considered calmly his own scheme and his own unsettled state of mind he would arrive at the conclusion that misguided Conservatives might be disposed to regard the workings of his political mind, as he had revealed it to them, with a feeling of acute suspicion. The Government were in this dilemma. Had they a plan formed in their own minds? If they had, they were not treating the House with confidence in not explaining it; and if they had no plan they were presenting to the House the first step of a great Reform measure before they had thought it out in all its most essential particulars and details. It was said that a re-distribution scheme could not be included in the Franchise Bill at the present. But he had read in Mr. Mayne's able pamphlet on "The Coming Reform," a good suggestion, which was this—that if the Government finding, after a calm review of the position, that it would be "wickedly absurd"—to use the language of the Prime Minister—that they should include redistribution in the Franchise Bill, let them just insert a little innocent clause in their Franchise Bill postponing its operation until the other measure was passed. Did not the Prime Minister think the House would be wickedly and absurdly foolish to give the slightest credence to the suggestions he had made as to the possible operations of the Bill? When would they be told the plan of the redistribution measure? Was the measure so much a necessary part of the Reform programme that the Prime Minister was bound particularly to apologize for not presenting it to the House, and yet so independent of it that they were not to be given a statement to guide their action in reference to the Bill now under discussion? It was all very well for the Prime Minister to mean to bring in a Redistribution Bill; but was it not very strange that he did not tell the House when he meant to bring it in, or at least state what were the principles upon which it would proceed? They had been told in the Press that the House would at least be supplied with the outline, if not with the details of the measure; but they had not heard a single word from the Prime Minister as to what he might do. What was to be the basis of the Bill? Was it to be based upon population and electoral districts? The Prime Minister, speaking for himself alone, said his sketch did not go in that direction. At present, variety was the essence of the Constitution. The variety of our Parliamentary system was that which gave it a distinct position among the Assemblies of the world, and that which constituted the rarest element of our electoral power; and if anything verging on "electoral districts" were adopted, it must, of necessity, reduce the country to the dead level of common uniformity. The Prime Minister had not told the House, even by a hint, how many Members must be transferred from boroughs to counties. He should like to know how many more than 60 borough Members the Prime Minister considered would be taken from boroughs and sent to counties? He should be glad to know why 40 or 50 boroughs at present returning Members to this House would be, of necessity, deprived of their distinctive individuality? These were important and interesting questions. The Prime Minister had not told them whether redistribution was to be on the basis of population or taxation. He had not told them whether grouping was to be carried out; and, if so, to what extent. The House knew the legitimate expectations of Scotland; but the Prime Minister had not told them with anything like the detail they had a right to expect whether the representation in Scotland was to be increased. They knew that Scotland expected from 10 to 14 additional Members; but the only answer of the Prime

Minister was that its claims should be considered and acknowledged. That might be done by adding one or two Members for well-known Radical constituencies. As to Wales, the Prime Minister was still more cautious. He did not even mention it. Wales was a difficulty in the Prime Minister's way, and in the way of the Cabinet, for whom the right hon. Gentleman did not speak. He was as positive as he could be of anything in the world that there were substantial dissentients in the Cabinet, from the statement of the Prime Minister that he was in favour of not diminishing the number of Members for Ireland. To his mind, that statement of the Prime Minister, blurted out as he gave it, was a coarse and rather transparent bid for the Irish vote. He would give some figures, which, however, he would not discuss. Each Scotch Member represented 64,000 persons; each English Member 54,000; each Irish member 51,000; and each Welsh Member, 45,000. Surely, upon those figures, Wales would lose some Members. At all events, Ireland was in this position—that the Prime Minister, who had some ulterior objects in view, would proclaim that it was the cardinal point of his programme that he would not consider the question of the reduction of the Representatives of that country. These were important points that must be considered in the light of common sense, and in the face of that circumstance to which, no doubt, a substantial part of the Prime Minister's speech was directed, and that was, a Dissolution, which the right hon. Gentleman saw could not be very long delayed. What was the course taken by the Government? It was an inversion of the confidence trick. "Trust me," the Prime Minister said, "because we won't trust you; give me a blank cheque, and let me fill it up as I will." And to-night the right hon. Gentleman used the remarkable words—"We will walk into no trap;" but did he think that the independent Members of the House of Commons were so silly as to walk into the traps that he so ostentatiously spread before them? The franchise, as the Prime Minister had expounded it, was a great maze, and the Redistribution Bill was its clue. The Prime Minister wanted them to walk into the maze whilst he kept the clue concealed in his own mind, telling them that, perhaps, at some remote time, when they were lost in the toils of the maze, he would let them know the clue. If redistribution was to be dealt with by this Parliament how could it be dealt with after the death-knell of the Parliament had been sounded by the passing of this Bill; for the passing of the Franchise Bill would proclaim the unfitness of the present House of Commons as Representatives of the nation. How, then, after that proclamation could the present House of Commons deal firmly and boldly with the question of redistribution? And if the question was to be postponed from this to another Parliament what would be the position? A new Parliament would have to be summoned, elected by the new constituencies. It would have to do this specific work of redistribution, and then in turn must be dissolved. Could anyone imagine a course more intensely inconvenient than to have two Dissolutions in order to avoid the obvious course of dealing with the matter at once? Anyone who had considered redistribution would see that it was one of the largest parts of the Reform Question. It was obvious that it could be worked in any way that the cunning manipulator desired. It might be worked to destroy the rights of the Crown, and to make it impossible. It might be worked to destroy popular rights, or all our political institutions. And, under these circumstances, they were asked to place a blank order in the hands of the Prime Minister to redistribute when and how he pleased. What was the opinion of Mr. Bright in 1866? He said—

> "I could frame a measure which would give a vote to every man in the Kingdom, and redistribution could be so framed that representation would be infinitely worse than at present."

And yet they were asked in the face of that warning not to insist upon something like an honest and frank revelation of the workings, so far as they were developed, of the Ministerial mind. All history was against the Prime Minister on this question; in 1832, 1854, 1858 and 1859, and in 1860 the two measures were combined, and in 1866 the House compelled the Prime Minister to combine them, although at the outset he took a line which was more honest than that which he had taken to-night. On that occasion the Premier promised he would reveal the redistribution scheme before the Committee stage of the Bill. What was the puny, transparent excuse which the Premier gave to-night for not doing so? The right hon. Gentleman knew all those precedents better than any of them; and yet he had the temerity to say to the House that this was the first complete Bill that had ever been presented to Parliament. Of course, everything turned upon the meaning which the right hon. Gentleman gave to the word "complete." If complete meant the joining of these two provisions of Reform, it was no answer to say that there was completeness as to grouping three parts of the United Kingdom together; but, so far as he could see, that was the only attempt which the Prime Minister made to escape from the obvious and overwhelming force of every precedent that could be cited. What was the explanation as to 1866 which the Prime Minister suggested? In 1866 there had been some contention. The lines between town and country were in existence, and it became necessary, in order to prevent jerrymandering, to combine the two Bills. But was it not obvious to anyone that it was more necessary now than in 1866? Why, the points of demarcation between town and country were obliterated by this Bill. It would be possible under it for the Prime Minister to call town country and country town; and that very power of so mixing and confusing urban districts rendered it more necessary now than ever that the House should insist upon getting the same frank exposition of what was going to be done. Parliamentary authority upon this question was unanswerable and invincible. Again he would quote Mr. Bright. Speaking at Bradford, in 1859, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The question of distribution is the very soul of the question, and unless you get that you will be deceived; and when the Bill is passed you may possibly have to lament that you are not in a position in which you would wish to find yourselves."

Possibly, the authority of that right hon. Gentleman was no longer of any avail with the Cabinet now that he had become a moderate man. But they might listen to what Lord Stanley, who was now their trusted and honoured Colleague, said in April, 1866—

> "When we are framing that which really is a new Constitution for the country, it is as insane an act to sanction part of a scheme without knowing the whole, as it would be to begin building a palace room by room without an estimate or a general plan, and with only the assurance of the architect that he understands his business. . . . . Our judgment ought to be free, unbiassed, and founded on full knowledge."—(3 *Hansard*, [182] 1176.)

Now, in the present case, he admired the architect very much; but he would like him to give them, if not full knowledge, at all events something to enlighten their darkness. After 1866 this question passed into the new phase. The present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan) took it up and brought it into academic prominence, and he commenced in 1872 dealing with the question in a very able and remarkable oration. On that occasion the Prime Minister spoke very differently to what he did now. Even now the right hon. Gentleman did not strike him (Mr. Gibson) as being intensely in love with his own measure; but in 1872 the right hon. Gentleman was coldness itself towards the proposal. He said—

> "It is absolutely impossible that the present distribution of seats should continue. . . . In point of fact, then, the proposal is not a proposal to be dealt with in a few lines of an Act of Parliament. It is a proposal for a new Parliamentary Reform Act upon a larger scale."—(*Ibid.* [210] 1911.)

But what was changed since then? Why should we now adopt a Bill of a few lines, and relegate the larger measure to the future? In the debate of 1877 the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said—

> "The wise and the honest course for those of us who desire both reforms (franchise and redistribution) is, then, to connect them in our movement from the first. . . . . There are some of us who go so far as to believe that a redistribution of political power will be found to as greatly transcend in importance the mere extension of the franchise as it does in difficulty of treatment."—(*Ibid.* [235] 500-505-6.)

He (Mr. Gibson) thought those were good sentences; and he would be glad to hear the right hon. Baronet repeat them on the present occasion, even in the form of a pious personal reflection of his own, not binding any of his Colleagues. He now turned to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), who seemed to have said more sensible things than most public men, though, perhaps, as much could not be said of his performances. But in February, 1878, the noble Marquess said—

> "I think my hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) has done very well to bring these two subjects together under the view of the House, because I believe that whenever the House does proceed to deal practically with this question it will insist, as it has done before, that the question shall not be dealt with partially, but as a whole."—(*Ibid.* [238] 245.)

If there was any meaning in the language of Parliamentary conviction, if there was any meaning in Parliamentary precedent, could the Government suggest any reason, or shape any justification, for the extraordinary want of confidence and want of fairness shown by them in reference to this question to-night? The last excuse of the Prime Minister was one which he never thought to hear at the end of his long career. The Prime Minister said that the franchise was an Imperial question, redistribution a local one; and, therefore, for the sake of the Imperial measure, the local measure must go to the wall. That struck him as being peculiar; because, whatever epithets the Prime Minister might use, it was this redistribution which must ultimately determine the effect of the Franchise Bill. A few words upon Ireland and he had done. It was impossible to mention the subject of Ireland without seeing the necessity and justice of including in the Bill a scheme of redistribution. Anyone who looked an inch below the surface, anyone who did not wish to remain ignorant, anyone who did not wish to shut his eyes to plain and obvious facts, must see that expediency and justice required that, in the case of Ireland, there should be a Redistribution Bill combined with any Reform Bill which might be applied to that country. Was the matter so urgent in England and Scotland that it could not wait until Ireland was quieted down? Was it wise, was it statesmanlike, was it prudent, that at a time when Ireland was administered in such an exceptional way, when the people of the country could not be trusted to guide themselves by the ordinary laws of the country, to throw amongst them such a material for dispute and fresh agitation as this Bill presented? Was it not astounding to find that this time, when loyalty was struggling with disloyalty, should be chosen to forge new political weapons to put into the hands of those who told them in advance that they intended to use those weapons against them? If this Reform Bill passed for Ireland without any Redistribution Bill, the Government perfectly well knew that it must increase the Nationalist Party to something like 90 votes. There must be no pretence of ignorance on this subject. The Prime Minister did not venture to say one solitary word in justification for his action; but the House must have noticed how his eyes were directed to the Benches below the Gangway. Two defences for now dealing with Reform in Ireland had been attempted. It was said a Franchise Bill might, indeed, immensely increase the Nationalist Party, but they would then disunite. Irishmen believed a good deal, but there was a limit to Irishmen's credulity; and when it was said the Party who in Opposition had not got as yet everything for which they were struggling would break down because you made them strong, it was simple nonsense. Another feeble, wretched suggestion that was made was this—that if the majority of the Irish Members who would be returned to Parliament would be for destroying the Union and for separation, it was better to know it at once. He had seen that in various Party papers of great ability; he had read it in speeches of gifted men whom he respected; and he put to them in sober earnest this question—Do not you know that already without waiting for the Franchise Bill? Was it not rank nonsense to be pretending to be waiting for the Franchise Bill, when they knew by anticipation that what he said could not be gainsaid or denied? If there was to be a Reform Bill for Ireland it was absolutely necessary that a Redistribution Bill should accompany it. The Parliamentary problem was grave enough as it was. If there passed a Franchise Bill without the Redistribution Bill it would become stupendous. The matter was too plain. The Government were now nervous before the 35 Members who followed the lead of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in the House; but would they not tremble before 90? The Loyalist classes in Ireland were not confined to one class or one creed. He made that statement on behalf of his absent fellow-countrymen, from many of whom he differed in politics and religion. The Loyalist class were not confined to one Province or one locality. They were scattered over many parts of Ireland. They numbered one-third, or very little less than one-third, of the whole population. Supposing the Bill passed, what security would the House have—what security would the Loyalists of Ireland have—that they would not be treated with gross and wanton injustice? Was it not monstrous to remove many Loyalists from that House by a Franchise Bill, and in their enforced absence regard the 90 Nationalists, who thus would have a greater share of representation than they were entitled to, as having the right to dictate what the redistribution should be? Human nature was human nature, even in the Island of Saints; and how could they expect that 90 Nationalist Members would not struggle to maintain the rights and privileges which were given to them against their fellow-countrymen who were thus deprived of their political power and representation? If the Government meant an honest Redistribution Bill—if they meant fairly to protect the Loyalist minority in that country, they were bound to say now how they meant to guard that minority. If the Cabinet meant to deal with this question, and not one man, speaking for himself—he cared not how eminent that Member might be—they were bound to have a policy, and not to be shilly-shallying without making up their minds. If the Government meant the reduction of the Irish Members, as he believed they did, they were bound now fairly and frankly to avow it. If the Government, however, kept their counsel to themselves, they must expect that their motives would be variously and not very favourably interpreted. Those who were disposed to believe in the future courage of the Government would assuredly doubt their capacity to achieve the task that lay before them. That more numerous class of persons who doubted their future courage would be disposed now to question their present honesty. The question was too plain for cavil; it was too plain for concealment. Anyone who had listened to the speech of the Prime Minister must have been made aware of this fact—that he found it now very hard to deal with 35 or 40 Nationalist Members, and that he was very anxious, by tone, and glance, and manner, to conciliate them. If the Franchise Bill was passed without redistribution these 35 or 40 Members would become 90. Would it not be harder and far more difficult to deal with 90, and to get them to accept a redistribution scheme which might diminish their numbers, and which must diminish their strength? If the redistribution question were postponed, would not the minority suffer? Could the Scottish Members be quite sure that they would get an increase of their numbers? Could the country trust that the Prime Minister would carry out the views that he had sketched without committing himself? Could the country trust the Cabinet that had not yet made up their minds, to make them up at some future time, and to lead them in a safe direction? He thought he was entitled to ask this question—"Could the Cabinet trust themselves?" Had the Government honestly made up their minds that if this Franchise Bill were passed alone and simply, as stated by the Prime Minister, that they would then have resolution and power enough to work out a Redistribution Bill that would, in the case of Ireland, do justice to the loyal minority, and, in the case of the United Kingdom, do justice to the various interests at stake? He thanked the House for the patient hearing it had given to him. The Bill that had been introduced was uncertain in its operation, and it was unexplained in its results. He thought he was entitled to say that the country would demand that that Bill should be made, as far as possible, clear and certain. The Prime Minister must know that the subject he had presented to the House was one involving the widest differences of opinion. He must know that many persons in the House, and more persons in the country, entertained grave doubts as to the scope and the effect of this measure. He must see that this was a question which should be decided in full light, and with perfect confidence. It was only fair, reasonable, and just to treat the Representatives of the people with confidence and with candour. If complete frankness was not shown, and if the questions that he and others had ventured to suggest were not fairly answered, he would ask the country fairly to consider this question:—"Will not this Bill be regarded as a Party Bill—a Bill not honestly framed with a view to guard liberty and secure rights—a Bill assuredly not framed to secure that justice which we are entitled to—that highest form of justice which consists in justice to all?"

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in his exceedingly able speech, had avowed his uncompromising hostility to all reform, either for England, Ireland, or Scotland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman displayed in the earlier part of his speech a great anxiety for statistics, and complained that the Prime Minister had left the House in darkness as to the probable effects of this measure, because he had not quoted a long array of figures. Now, he (Mr. Fowler) would trouble the House with two figures forming one statistic, which constituted the basis of the arguments hon. Members on that side of the House intended to urge in defence of this measure, which justified them in defending it, which, in their opinion, would relieve the Government from all charges of a "shilly-shally" policy, and which would confirm the determination of himself and his Friends, whether with this Government, or whether with another Government, never to hold their hands until they had accomplished this great reform. Now the figure was this. There were in this country—and he was speaking of England, Ireland, and Scotland, for, after all, they were but one country, and he hoped they would always remain so—6,500,000 householders—persons earning their bread, paying taxes, and discharging all the responsibilities which in a civilized community devolved upon householders—and of those 6,500,000 barely 3,000,000, or less than one-half, had a right to vote in the election of Members of Parliament. Now, that one fact—they might surround it or mystify it with all kinds of speculation and prophecies about the redistribution of political power—was the stand-point of himself and those who acted with him; and he put it to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, who had spoken so gingerly about using the word "right," that it was as much the right of the householders who were excluded to have the same franchise as it was of the householders who were included. He believed that they were as capable of exercising political power, and were as largely interested in the State in which they were citizens. He believed they contributed as large a share to the National income as those who were included; and, therefore, he maintained that it was both unwise and unsafe to exclude that class from political power. He believed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was rather doubtful as to the position of the artizans in the neighbourhood of a large town. He could quite understand the difficulty which Conservative Members felt upon this question, because it was a very peculiar qualification to maintain in that House and in the country that a man's political position was to depend upon the fact whether he lived upon one side of a turnpike road or the other, or on the south or north bank of a river; while some more fortunate fellow-workman more favourably situated, but in every other respect the same, and not a bit more capable of discharging political duties, was able to enjoy political power. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said he thought that that matter might be met by a measure of redistribution. He (Mr. Fowler) would say a word about redistribution shortly; but did hon. Gentlemen opposite contend that the artizan who lived in the suburbs of our large towns ought or ought not to possess the franchise? Of the 2,000,000 whom the Prime Minister had spoken of as being desirous of including, he (Mr. Fowler) took it that one-half were skilled artizans residing in the neighbourhood of large towns; but the other 1,000,000 comprised the agricultural labourers, who not only had political grievances, but had political qualifications, as had been shown in the cases of East Retford and Cricklade to the satisfaction of the whole community. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite asked whether any man would be prepared to say that, if they extended the franchise, they would get a better House of Commons? Well, he (Mr. Fowler) was prepared to say that they would. That was what he believed. He was not advocating a change of this kind from a mere desire for electoral symmetry, nor as a mere Party move, in order to help them at a General Election; but because he believed that the House of Commons would be made better by it. They wished for Parliamentary Reform because they believed that Parliament ought to be reformed. They wished to have more work done, and they wanted it done much better; and they believed that one of the glaring defects of the present Parliamentary system was, that a majority of the Members of the House were not in touch with—and did not represent the feelings of—the majority of the people of the country. They believed that this vast legislative machine—one of the most magnificent that the world had ever seen—should not be at the mercy of childish folly; they wished to have Parliament more truly representing the people —to secure that it should do the work in a better way than it had been done hitherto. He was putting that shortly before the House, totally irrespective of any alteration of the voting power, or any question of redistribution by itself. Even assuming the possibility of the Government not intending to bring in a redistribution measure; assuming that they intended to continue the absurdity of keeping the existing constituencies as they were; he still said that there ought to be an extension of the franchise. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was extremely anxious for a redistribution of political power; so were Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House. They were as much dissatisfied with the present state of things as the right hon. and learned Gentleman was, although, perhaps, not aiming at the same results. It was stated that out of 6,500,000 householders there were only 3,000,000 voters. He would give the House another extraordinary figure, and it was that, of the existing 3,000,000 voters, 1,000,000 returned two-thirds of the Members of that House, while the other 2,000,000 only returned one-third. That was a state of things to which Liberals were quite as much opposed as Conservatives, and they were just as anxious for redistribution as the opposite side. But he did not know whether they were prepared to carry out that work of distribution on the same lines. Their idea of redistribution was that the majority should regulate the policy of the nation; and that the minority should not be able to perpetuate the power they now possessed. He could not understand why a county constituency of 11,000 or 12,000 should be deprived of political power because, by some anomaly, some little borough in the North or South of England possessed the right of returning two Members to Parliament. Therefore, he contended that the more drastic, the more thorough, and the more stringent the redistribution, the better it would be. He had heard the scheme which the Prime Minister had foreshadowed that night, and he thought that that measure would meet with very general approval. The right hon. Gentleman had drawn it upon lines which were in harmony with the views of the great majority of hon. Members on that side of the House, who were not anxious to see London possessing an enormous excess of representation; who were not anxious to see the old lines of the Constitution broken up, or the almost hereditary distinction between town and country abolished; but who did want the effective majority of the electors of the country to have a corresponding representation in the effective majority of the House. He did not think there could have been a more powerful speech in favour of redistribution than the remark made by the Marquess of Salisbury the other day at a public meeting, when he said that if at the last General Election 2,000 electors had voted in a different way from what they actually did vote the late Government would have remained in Office. Now, the actual fact was that about 500,000 voters were polled by the Liberal Party in excess of those polled by the Conservative candidates; and yet so absurd and so grotesque was the present representative system, that by some clever "jerrymandering" with 2,000 voters a most material effect might have been produced upon the destinies of the country, and a Conservative Government have been retained in power. Hon. Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House were as anxious to prevent that as hon. Members opposite; and they recognized the full force of the Prime Minister's argument that there could not be a satisfactory redistribution until there was a new Register, and they were able to know the forces and the figures with which they would have to deal. The sting of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, like a good many others, was in its tail, in the reference made to Ireland. It would be a very great pity if the debate was to be confined, as far as Ireland was concerned, to the two classes of Irish Representatives speaking at and against each other. He thought it was time that English Members should have something to say upon the subject of Irish representation. He himself would not accept any Reform Bill which did not put Ireland upon exactly the same footing as England and Scotland. They had committed a great many blunders in their government of Ireland; but he could not conceive a greater blunder than a system of sham representation. There were at that moment 1,000,000 householders in Ireland, and only 200,000 voters. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the people of Ireland were not fit to be trusted with Constitutional rights, and therefore they ought not to have the franchise. Formerly they were told that these precautions were directed against a minority of the Irish people, who were in hostility to law and order, and that the majority were in favour of the law, and would like to see order maintained. Whatever the state of the case might be, they must either govern Ireland as a Constitutional portion of the Empire or as a Crown Colony. He was satisfied that the people of this country would not endorse the latter proposition; he was satisfied they would never wish to have another Poland. Ireland must, therefore, be governed Constitutionally. They had tried imposing on Ireland an alien aristocracy, an alien Church, alien soldiers and policemen, and confiscation Acts; but they had not tried what the effect of giving them equal political rights would be. In future they must follow the maxim of the old Roman General, and must either treat the Irish people as citizens or slaves. He thought that one of the brightest features of the present Bill was that it treated the people of Ireland as equal citizens. No one had a right to criticize the Representatives that Ireland sent to the House of Commons. If there was to be a representative system, the people of Ireland had a right to send men who would represent them, no matter whether they were 90 Nationalists, or any other class—men who would come to the Imperial Parliament and state their grievances, and let the country be face to face with the situation. Whatever else Ireland had to complain of, they ought not to be put on a different footing from England and Scotland, deprived of their Constitutional rights, shorn of their Constitutional power, and then expected to render the same loyalty to the Constitution. He believed that, so far from this equal treatment being an element of danger in the measure, it was an element that would secure both the support of the country and of Parliament, and that it would produce very satisfactory and beneficial results. In reference to the general measure he would not detain the House. The introduction of a Bill was not the proper time for discussing its details; but he, for one, in reply to the challenge of the Prime Minister, said that hon. Members on that side of the House accepted the challenge. The Bill was, indeed, one worth having. The Bill was a great Bill. It would confer a great boon upon the people of this country; it would tend to strengthen the Constitution; and, in his belief, the more people they had inside the Constitution the better. Hon. Members opposite, who were perpetually telling the people of the country that they were the authors of the measure of 1867, and that the country was indebted to them for the enfranchisement of the working classes, were men who should sanction the extension of the same principle to all other people. He believed that history would settle the question who were the real parents of the Bill of 1867. To judge either by history, experience, or reason, they might fairly conclude, if they had any faith in representative principles or popular Government, or any faith in the people as a whole against individual classes, that the present measure would produce the same results as the Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867. He was in no fear of a Dissolution on that point. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite said—"If they could only appeal to the country." There was nothing he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would like better than to go to his constituents upon this Bill. He believed the country had made up its mind on the matter; and, whether it was this Parliament or the next, he believed they would only be carrying out the wishes of the country by extending the franchise. They might be content to defer until the next Session of this Parliament, or to a new Parliament, the discussion as a whole of a wise measure of redistribution; but he entreated them not to be in the dark upon the point. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite said that the people were deluded; that they would not know what either side meant; and that they would be altogether in the dark. If the Liberal Party and the Liberal Government meant anything they meant this—that the majority of the electors were to choose the majority of the Representatives of the House of Commons.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made a very able and a very loyal speech. He himself was always very sorry when he heard one of the Radical Party make a loyal speech, because he knew that the conjunction of loyalty and ability in a Radical invariably led to the Treasury Bench. He thought that hon. Members below the Gangway had already been drawn sufficiently near to the Treasury Bench; and he should regret if his hon. Friend (Mr. Fowler) were to have his loyalty accepted, and find himself removed from that portion of the House in which he now occupied a seat. The hon. Member had accused his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) of having treated the Radical Party as if they were deficient in intellect. He was sure that the hon. Member must altogether have misunderstood the remarks of his right hon. and learned Friend. He did not think it was open for anybody in that House to slight the intelligence of hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Benches opposite. It was not a deficiency of intellect, but a deficiency of independence, of which they complained. He might call it, if he were not using too strong a word, the prostitution of magnificent intellect to a slavish servility to the Government and a Party. That was what he greatly regretted; and it was a characteristic of the Radical Party of the modern day, which was certainly not a characteristic of the Radical Party of olden times, when its Leader was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). He thought the Prime Minister must have been a little disappointed with the effect of his great speech upon the House of Commons, and particularly with its effect upon his own side. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) had alluded, earlier in the evening, to the very scanty attendance of the Liberal Party that night upon the Benches behind the Prime Minister. He never recollected, considering what the prospect was before the House that evening, having seen the Liberal Party, and especially the Radical Party, so badly represented. ["Oh!"] He could assure hon. Members opposite, who could not, of course, see the Benches behind them, that there had been most conspicuous gaps, and most deplorable gaps, on those Benches during the delivery of the Prime Minister's speech—gaps which had filled him (Lord Randolph Churchill) with dismay. But not only had he noticed the scanty attendance of Liberal Members, but he had observed, also, the extraordinary absence of enthusiasm among them. The Prime Minister had recourse, as he always had, to all the well-known arts of eloquence; but his recourse to those arts failed to secure the usual response. Time after time the Prime Minister turned round to his Radical followers in order to elicit a little encouragement; but his appeals were received with an obstinate and persevering muteness. Never were the Radical Party so mute as they had been that night. He had been trying to account for the fact; but he could only do so by reference to a passage which was contained in the Royal Speech. The Prime Minister told the House that he was not going to walk into any trap that might be set for him by the Tory Party; but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) thought it very probable that the Radical Party would not walk into the trap set for them by the Prime Minister. In the Speech from the Throne there was this remarkable passage—

> "A measure will at once be presented to you which will have for its principal object the enlargement of the Occupation Franchise in Parliamentary Elections throughout the United Kingdom."

Now came the attraction to Conservative Members, and the repulsion to Radical Members—

> "The experience gained during half-a-century by the progressive admission of augmented numbers to a share in our representative system, happily warrant the belief that again, as heretofore, the result of a judicious extension of the franchise will be a still closer attachment of the

nation to the Throne, the law, and the institutions of the country."

No wonder the Radical Party did not hail that reference to the institutions of the country, because next to the Throne the greatest institution of the country was the House of Lords. That institution has not yet been handed over to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He repeated, that the greatest institution next to the Throne was the House of Lords; and he would therefore ask hon. Members opposite whether they were prepared to place reliance upon the words which the Prime Minister had put into the mouth of the Queen, and if they were prepared to vote for a Bill which would result in making the people still more closely attached to the House of Lords? And not only to the House of Lords. He appealed to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who was the respected and honoured Leader of the Nonconformist Party in that House, whether he was going to vote for a Bill which his adored Prime Minister told him would result in the closer attachment of the people to the Established Church of England?—certainly one of the greatest institutions of the country. If they were to place reliance upon the opinions of the Prime Minister, as expressed in the Speech from the Throne, they could very well account for the comparatively apathetic manner in which this great measure had been received by the Radical Party. He wished to notice now one part of the Prime Minister's speech which struck him as being extremely remarkable, considering that it came from the right hon. Gentleman. He referred to the use which the right hon. Gentleman made of the personality of the Crown. He did not know whether other hon. Members had noticed it; but on six or seven occasions, and especially towards the end of the speech, the right hon. Gentleman introduced the personality of the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman made use of these words—"This Bill the Government introduce to you in the name of the Queen." He (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not believe that such an expression had ever been made use of by a Prime Minister before; and not only did the right hon. Gentleman use that expression, but he made continual allusions to the Speech from the Throne, and the matters mentioned in that Speech as having the assent of the Crown. No doubt the intention of the right hon. Gentleman was to produce an impression on persons out-of-doors, who were not acquainted with the strict Constitutional law of the country, that this Bill was not only the production of the Prime Minister and his Colleagues, but that they had drawn their ideas and inspiration from the highest possible authority. ["Oh!"] No doubt the idea was very horrible to hon. Members opposite; but, with all due submission to those hon. Members, he protested against the insinuation distinctly made by the Prime Minister that a higher authority than that of the Ministry was in favour of this Bill and was pressing it forward. There was also one other little peculiarity which characterized the Speech of the Prime Minister, and which was worth mentioning. Among the new franchises about to be created, and which the Prime Minister held out as a strong bait to his supporters, was one which he had been pleased to call the "service franchise." He thought the right hon. Gentleman might have been a little more candid to the House in reference to that franchise. The right hon. Gentleman had given the House to understand that it was a great act of charity to invent the service franchise; but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not know whether the majority of hon. Members were aware that this "service franchise" had been stuck into the Bill merely for the purpose of enfranchising the Scotch agricultural labourers, who would, under the peculiar law and tenure of Scotland, not be enfranchised by the ordinary occupation franchise. The service franchise in reality enfranchised the whole of the Scotch agricultural population. He was not stating this for the purpose of opposition; but he was stating a fact, and he did not know whether the people out-of-doors were generally aware of that fact. The Prime Minister had also entered into a strong defence of the peasantry of this country; but all that he had said in their favour amounted to a statement that they were free labourers. Now, it had never been contended that they were slaves, and he did not understand why the fact of the agricultural labourer not being in a state of slavery gave him, at the same time, the right to exercise the franchise. The Prime Minister had cited the small boroughs of the country as a proof of the fitness of the agricultural labourer to exercise the franchise. Now, the Prime Minister had never represented a small borough. [An hon. MEMBER: Newark.] The Prime Minister had certainly sat for Newark, but it was hardly what could be called an agricultural borough; and, curiously enough, when the right hon. Gentleman represented it he was a Conservative, so that that could not be taken into the account on the present occasion. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) had the honour to sit for a small borough, which was composed very largely of agricultural labourers; and as, since the Reform Bill of 1867, there had been three contested elections in that borough, his constituents had become more or less accustomed to decide political questions, and might be said to be trained to political life. But having had a considerable experience of agricultural labourers, excluding the agricultural labourers who were included in the borough of Woodstock, he could say, without fear of contradiction, that the agricultural labourer, as a general rule, was absolutely unfitted for the exercise of the franchise. The ordinary agricultural labourer outside the boroughs had no knowledge whatever of the elementary facts relating to political questions, and he cared even less about them. The questions which agitated the agricultural labourer were questions altogether of a petty nature, such as the disputes between themselves and their employers, and questions affecting their cottages, or things of that kind. He would defy the most eloquent or the most ingenious Radical Member opposite to go down to any of the agricultural counties and talk to the agricultural labourers upon political questions with the most remote prospect of arousing them to more enthusiasm than would be produced by reading to them a chapter from the Greek Testament. He said that with the utmost confidence, and he was sure that his experience of the agricultural labourer was much greater than that of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who lived entirely in towns. The Prime Minister talked about the importance of enfranchising the mining population of the country; but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) had always held, and should continue to hold, that almost the entire mining population of the country could be enfranchised by a new Boundary Bill. He had always held that the mining population ought to be treated upon a totally different basis from the agricultural population; and if Her Majesty's Government wished to enfranchise them, they should confine their endeavours to the mining population, without going rashly into the agricultural districts. Then, again, the Prime Minister had stated to the House that this was the first complete Reform Bill that had ever been produced. [An hon. MEMBER: No; just the contrary.] He had taken down the words of the right hon. Gentleman at the time, and he had certainly said that this was a complete Bill. The right hon. Gentleman, having so spoken, proceeded to deprecate any Amendments that might be moved to the Bill, and then to point out, with sledge-hammer effect, what an imperfect Bill it was, using conclusive arguments to show—if he showed anything at all—that the measure was one which Her Majesty's Government ought to be asked to take back again, in order that it might be made as nearly perfect a measure as might be. Among the other things the right hon. Gentleman admitted, or rather broadly stated, was that the Bill did not attempt to deal with the subject of female suffrage. Now, he called upon the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) to declare at once his intention to repudiate such a Bill; because in a speech which the noble Marquess made at Accrington he had stated that the great fault of the Conservative Reform Bill of 1867 was that it did not include female suffrage.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the speech to which the noble Lord referred was mis-reported. He had never mentioned the subject of women suffrage at all in that speech.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was inclined to think that the noble Marquess's memory was at fault.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, if the noble Lord would permit him, he would state what the mis-report was. He had said that the Bill of the Conservative Government was deficient in the omission of certain classes whom it was desirable to enfranchise. The mistake was that the word "whom" was transposed in the report of the speech into "women," and thus a precisely different significance was given to it from that which he intended.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he could understand the word "whom" being transposed into "women;" but he could not understand how the most careless and stupid reporter in the world could transpose the word "whom" into "female;" and if the noble Marquess would refer to the report of his speech in *The Times* he would find that that was the word there given.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had looked at the report yesterday, and he found that the word "whom" had been transposed into the word "women."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was surprised that the noble Marquess had not made this correction before. It was a very curious thing, because he (Lord Randolph Churchill), among others, had made comments upon the matter before in the country. Nevertheless, the noble Marquess had not deemed it necessary either to correct the inaccurate report or to refer to it in any way. It now suited the convenience of the noble Marquess to correct the report; and all he (Lord Randolph Churchill) could say was that he was sorry the noble Marquess should be liable to have his pronunciation of the word "whom" mistaken by the reporters for that of "women."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT remarked, that this was the first time he had ever heard the distinct denial of a Member of the House called into question.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was quite ready to apologize to the noble Marquess for having misrepresented him; but he would implore the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary not to get excited before the proper and necessary time arrived. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) thought the advocates of proportional representation would have strong reason to complain of its omission from the Bill. The Prime Minister himself admitted that the measure was imperfect in that respect, and the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that there were in the House no less than 120 Members who were pledged to the principle of proportional representation. They had banded themselves together to secure proportional representation, and the prospects of the Bill upon that matter might, therefore, be forecast. Then, again, the Prime Minister admitted that the measure did not deal with plurality of votes, or the representation of the Universities. Therefore, although the Prime Minister had declared the Bill to be perfect, he had himself shown that there were many subjects which it did not attempt to deal with. Then, having stated its defects, the right hon. Gentleman turned round to his supporters and implored them, for Heaven's sake, not to endanger the Bill, because it would give 2,000,000 more voters. "Do not," said the right hon. Gentleman, "move Amendments if you can help it. Do not make a remark if you can possibly contain yourselves, because the Bill gives you 2,000,000 more voters." Now, he (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not believe any Reform Bill had ever been introduced upon such a basis. If they were to accept the Bill because it would give the country 2,000,000 voters, why should they not go still further in the same direction, and accept the figure which was sketched out for them the other day at Wolverhampton by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), which would add 6,000,000 voters? Surely, if they were to accept the Bill because it added 2,000,000 voters, there was no reason why they should not accept more readily one which would add 6,000,000. It seemed to him that the Government had no longer any care to preserve the variety of representation, or the representation of different classes. They had no longer any care that classes and interests should be represented in the House of Commons, as they had been from olden times. They cared nothing for the old traditions of Parliamentary life, which had distinguished the House of Commons above everything else from all other Representative Assemblies in the world. All they cared for was mere numbers. They proposed to add 2,000,000 voters, and therefore the House must take the Bill. For his own part, he ventured to say that there were other subjects of much greater importance which the Government had better have dealt with before they turned their attention to the subject of Parliamentary Reform. He should have preferred to have seen them deal with the finances of the country in a *bonâ fide* way, instead of putting up Radical Members to propose insincere Resolutions in regard to the Public Expenditure. Why not devote the Session to a revision of the preponderating weight of taxation which now pressed so unfairly upon the working classes? Or why not have taken some steps to inquire into the cause of the present depression of trade? Considering the remarkable meeting which had been held at Manchester the other day, and the number of labourers who were out of employment, together with the general misery which existed in our large towns, as established by the articles, either written or dictated by the President of the Board of Trade, which had appeared in the public journals, and considering the falling-off in our manufactures, he did not think that an inquiry into the state of trade would have been in any way of inferior importance to this unnecessary attempt to reform Parliamentary representation. He should also have liked to see an inquiry instituted into the state of Agriculture, and also into the question of Local Government and Local Taxation. Why had inquiry into those subjects been postponed? They were subjects which he thought the country would far sooner have dealt with than the question of Parliamentary Reform. The omission from the Bill of the question of redistribution would place great difficulties in the path of the Government, and the moment the glamour thrown over the Bill by the Prime Minister's speech was worn off, the people of the country would begin to see that the omission of all reference to this question was a fatal blot in the measure. The Prime Minister had stated his own opinions upon the subject; but he had been careful to say that they were not the opinions of his Colleagues. ["No!"] At any rate, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would not pledge his Colleagues to them. Hon. Members opposite, however, seemed to be in a very captious frame of mind. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not regard the Prime Minister's statement of his opinions as if it were entitled to exercise much weight upon the House of Commons, except as far as those opinions were useful as a guide to the opinions which the right hon. Gentleman would not hold next year. The Prime Minister had pronounced in favour of maintaining the distinction between town and country, so that they might confidently look forward, if Parliament lasted until next year, to the absolute absorption of the country in the towns. The right hon. Gentleman had pronounced against equal electoral districts, so that they might, with equal confidence, look forward to the early establishment of that principle—that was to say, if they were to judge from the past professions of the right hon. Gentleman and the uniformity with which he opposed them afterwards. The Prime Minister said that a Conservative organ had stated that it would be madness to include in the Bill the question of the franchise as it affected Ireland. Now, what was the Conservative organ that stated that? What was the Conservative organ? That Conservative organ was no other than the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, who had lost no opportunity of impressing upon the people that any attempt to place England and Ireland on a footing of equality with regard to civil rights would be madness. It was the expression of the noble Marquess that was guiding hon. Members on that side of the House in the matter; and if the rumour had any foundation in it, there was a time during the winter when the noble Marquess entertained great doubts whether the Bill ought to be extended to Ireland. When his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) talked about the Prime Minister being worshipped by the Cabinet, there was great cheering on the Treasury Bench, and nobody cheered louder or more lustily than the Home Secretary. He wanted to know when the worship of the Prime Minister by the Home Secretary began? He doubted whether there was much adoration of the Prime Minister by the right hon. and learned Gentleman during the last Parliament, or whether there was much adoration of him by the Secretary of State for War when the noble Marquess was forced by the Prime Minister to abandon his own opinions as to extending the franchise to Ireland, and was compelled to take the view of the Prime Minister. With regard to those who talked about perfect equality between England and Ireland, he would remind them of the Coercion Acts. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who was now in such a gushing frame of mind with regard to Ireland, never gave a vote, or made a speech, against the Coercion Acts.

MR. H. H. FOWLER begged the noble Lord's pardon. He had both spoken and voted against them.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he accepted the hon. Member's statement; but, at any rate, the opposition of the hon. Gentleman to those Acts was the least conspicuous opposition that could be imagined. If the Government would repeal the Coercion Acts; if they came to Parliament and told the House they were able to allow freedom of public speaking in Ireland, and that in future it would not be necessary to send the police to the Land League meetings in order to take down the words which the speakers used; if it were not hereafter found necessary to send the military to keep the peace between the conflicting parties; if it could be said that Ireland was in the same state of tranquillity as England, they might then talk of political equality between the two countries. He did not believe that the Bill would pass the House of Commons. Her Majesty's Government had deliberately put off this question of Reform until they were no longer in a condition to deal with it. He did not believe, for his own part, in Reform being dealt with by a discredited and exhausted Ministry. The Government had other matters to engage their attention; the country was thinking of their foreign engagements and their foreign policy. Perhaps to-morrow it would be thinking of the revelations which the Home Secretary had made that night; and, for his own part, he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be better employed in putting in force the powers conferred upon him in the last hours of last Session for putting a stop to dynamite explosions, and in directing more attention to the legitimate business of his Department, than in trying to force through the House a Reform Bill for which there was no popular demand. He believed the people of this country valued peace and honour abroad a great deal more than they did Reform; they valued the security of life and property at home more than the mere right of voting; and he would prophecy that the day would never come when the Speaker would put the Question—"That this Bill be read the third time."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Blennerhassett.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall greatly regret to see this debate adjourned. On the seven last occasions when Reform Bills have been introduced into this House there has only been one on which the debate upon the introduction of the Bill exceeded a single evening—only one out of seven. The state of Business is very crowded, and three weeks were spent before we got the Report of the Address. Gentlemen are extremely anxious to go forward to other questions, and to reach the time when we may be able to deal with Local Government and other subjects mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. This is a Bill which, in substance, does not involve novel principles, but which carries into effect substantially in the counties what was done by the Party opposite, or, at all events, with their authority, in the towns. Under these circumstances, I should hope the House would be willing to allow the Bill to be introduced, and to fix a day for the second reading, when, no doubt, the measure will be fully discussed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I observe that the Motion for the adjournment of the debate comes from the other side of the House; but I am bound to say that there are a considerable number of my Friends who are anxious for an adjournment, and who desire to address the House as early as possible. Upon the proposal of Her Majesty's Government, I must say that, considering the magnitude of the questions which are involved in the introduction of the Bill, and the questions that are to be discussed which are not the details of the Bill so much as the omissions from it, render it very reasonable, before the Bill is introduced, that there should be a further opportunity of sifting and examining the Ministerial position. I hope, therefore, there will be no objection made to the adjournment of the debate. I may remind the right hon. Gentleman that when the Reform Bill of 1866 was introduced—I think on the 13th of March; I believe it was as late as that—it was debated for two nights. But, having regard to what I may call the novelty of this measure, in respect of what it omits and what it provides—I do not say it is a great measure; but it certainly is a big measure—considering all these matters, I do not think we make any unreasonable request when we ask that the debate should be adjourned for one more night.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am very unwilling to seem exacting; but as the right hon. Gentleman states that another night is required, with great reluctance, and with great regret, I shall consent.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

FRESHWATER FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 57.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH said, before he assented to the Motion for going into Committee on this Bill, he must ask the hon. Gentleman in charge of it for some explanation of the provisions contained in it. As the matter stood, he gathered that it was a proposal to amend the Freshwater Fisheries Act, which was only passed some three years ago, and the operation of which, so far as he was aware, had never been the subject of complaint. It was, therefore, difficult to understand in what respect the existing law stood in need of amendment. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would be able to remove his objection to Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair by supplying some further information than they at present possessed.

MR. HIBBERT said, he had explained the nature of the Bill on the Motion for its second reading; but he might state, for the information of the right hon. Baronet, that the Bill had been introduced on the representation of the Fishery Boards that the present law was insufficient in respect of the size of mesh used in freshwater fisheries. The Bill had been approved by every Fishery Board throughout the country, and its object was to fix the minimum size of mesh which might be used on the one hand, and the maximum size of mesh which a person could be compelled to use on the other. That was the only provision which the Bill contained, and to that no objection existed on the part of the Angling Associations of the country. He did not propose to do more than take the Committee stage of the Bill on that occasion.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he hoped his right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would not press his objection to the Bill, because he considered it was a measure which might very well be allowed to pass. But before the House consented to Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair, he should be glad to obtain from the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) some explanation as to how far he was disposed to admit of some substantial alterations of the present law being introduced into the Bill—alterations which had been practically agreed upon amongst anglers—such, for instance, as that of limiting the Exemption Clause of the Act of 1878, with regard to the taking of fish for baits and for scientific purposes in private waters. He was aware of the difficulty of introducing, or even seeking to introduce, such an alteration into a Bill of this kind; because it might be objected that it was not strictly germane to the chief object of the measure; and rather than delay or defeat the passage of the Bill he would not press an Amendment of that nature, although he considered it useful to ask the hon. Gentleman to take the matter into consideration, and to give some information as to the extent to which the proposal indicated would be favourably received. Subject to these considerations, he thought it would be well for the House to allow the hon. Gentleman to take the Committee stage of the Bill.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY said, that however necessary it might be, in the interest of freshwater fisheries throughout the country, that some measure should be passed for the purpose of protecting the young trout and charr, he would point out that the Bill before them went considerably further than that. He had received a letter, so recently as yesterday, from the President of the Usk Board of Conservators, indicating Amendments which it was thought desirable to introduce into the Bill. The objection made to the Bill in its present form was that, whereas it made provision for the alteration of the mesh of nets, it did not provide any protection for fixed nets set for the purpose of catching eels; and, in the opinion of skilled persons interested in that branch of industry, it was necessary that such protection should be given. Hon. Members knew very well that the eel, unlike the respectable trout which remained quietly in his pool, was a most disreputable fish, persisting, as it did, in going to the sea every year; and it was, therefore, obvious that the kind of nets he referred to were only of use for catching that "roving blade" on his journey to the sea. He need hardly remind hon. Members that the difference between the two kinds of fish was so great in other respects, that what might be necessary in the one case would be totally inapplicable in the other. If it was intended to give to Boards of Conservators power to decree that a net of two-inch mesh—or even of three inches, as was proposed by an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Birkbeck) in an Amendment on the Paper—should be used for catching eels, he ventured to say that it would be easier for the Prime Minister to catch a whole shoal of Conservative Members in the meshes of a rhetorical argument, than it would be for a fisherman to catch an eel in such a net as was contemplated in the Bill, the mesh of which would have a circumference of 12 inches. He appealed to the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert) to take this matter into consideration; because, unless an Amendment of the kind indicated were introduced into the Bill, a great injury would be done to a large and respectable body of men who lived by catching that peculiar fish—the eel.

MR. HIBBERT said, he should be quite willing to consider any Amendment which might be proposed with regard to eel nets; and he would remark that the hon. Member (Mr. Birkbeck) had already put down an Amendment on that subject. As he had mentioned, he did not propose to take the clauses of the Bill until Monday next.

MR. WARTON said, he hoped that the proverbial patience demanded of anglers would be shown in not pressing this Bill forward with too much haste. When he remembered how many Angling Societies there were throughout the country naturally interested in the measure, he appealed to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) to grant a little more time for its consideration. He suggested that Monday week would be a fitting day on which to proceed with the Bill in Committee, instead of next Monday, the date mentioned by the hon. Gentleman. He submitted that after experiencing the tremendous elocutionary power which had been brought to bear upon them by the Prime Minister in introducing the Representation of the People Bill, the House was not in a fit state to give this measure the consideration which it demanded. It was hard, indeed, to oppose any Bill brought in by the hon. Gentleman; and such was his confidence in the hon. Gentleman's good sense and kindness that he had not put down one of those Motions which he sometimes felt it his duty to place upon the Paper in respect of other Bills. In view of all the circumstances, he would ask the hon. Gentleman to say that the Bill should be brought forward on Monday week.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he believed that almost every possible representation on this question was made during the passage through the House of the Freshwater Fisheries Act of 1878; and he should, therefore, be glad of some further explanation of the reasons for introducing the present Bill. He was not aware that any complaints as to the working of the Act of 1878 had been made to Parliament during the last Session; and he would like to know whether the representations which had resulted in this measure had come from one district alone—that was to say, the Lake District, in which he was particularly interested; or whether there were complaints from other parts of the country; and, if so, how many? He should be glad to afford the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill every assistance in his power in passing it from the stage of second reading; but he desired to have beforehand some information as to the working of the Act of 1878.

MR. HIBBERT said, that the Bill was brought in owing to the representations of one Fishery Board—namely, that which included the Lake District in its jurisdiction. So far as he was aware, there was no complaint against the working of the Freshwater Fisheries Act of 1878; on the contrary, he believed it had given satisfaction in all parts of the country to those interested in freshwater fishing. With regard to the time when the Bill would be taken in Committee, he could not go beyond the statement that an opportunity would be afforded for considering any Amendments that might be proposed.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

DUBLIN MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART BILL.—[Bill 59.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read, and *discharged.*

Bill referred to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented two clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (PROVINCIAL SITTINGS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Whitley, Bill to provide for Provincial Sittings of the High Court of Justice in certain populous places, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Whitley, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Lewis Fry, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Armitage, and Mr. Agnew.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 121.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to secure to the public access to mountains and moorlands in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Webster, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Barclay, and Mr. Samuel Smith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 122.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 29*th February*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Third Reading*—Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) * (18); Matrimonial Causes * (20), and *passed.*

EGYPT — (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN) POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—THE SLAVE TRADE.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Earl DE LA WARR, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Papers or Correspondence can be laid upon the Table of the House, showing what understanding exists between this country and the Porte with regard to the action taken by Her Majesty's Government in Egypt proper and the Soudan; and to move—

> "That a copy of the Convention of 1877, relative to the traffic in slaves in Central Africa, be reprinted."

said, he had listened with great attention to the recent debate upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government with reference to Egypt; but, with the exception of what fell from the noble Marquess below him (the Marquess of Salisbury), he did not remember that any allusion was made to the subject which he desired now to bring under notice—he did not think it was even mentioned by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville)—he meant, whether any understanding existed between this country and the Porte with regard to the action of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt and the Soudan? There was a time, and not very long ago, when the foreign policy of this country was conducted upon very different principles from those which regulated it now. It would then have been impossible that events which were at this moment pressing upon the country could have taken place. Turkey at that time was, and had always been, one of the truest and most faithful Allies of this country, and would still be so; but, unhappily, there was no response of sympathy on the part of Her Majesty's Government. If they could not gather much from official documents which had been placed in their hands, they learnt, at least, that the Government had been virtually responsible for the government of Egypt from the time of the bombardment of Alexandria. The country was shortly afterwards occupied by British troops. That was followed by the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The Egyptian Army which was left was disbanded, and the Government was entirely disabled. And what happened afterwards? When Lord Dufferin was sent to Cairo, was anything done without his advice? Had it not been the same since the arrival of Sir Evelyn Baring? As the climax, showing where the ruling power really was, the Government of the Khedive was dismissed by a telegram from Downing Street. Then followed the fatal expedition of Hicks Pasha. True, Lord Dufferin said he did not advise it; but would not a word from Downing Street have stopped it? And so, also, in the case of the disastrous attempt of Baker Pasha. And now the danger of the Soudan had suddenly broken upon them—the greater part of that extensive country was in open rebellion, and the decision of Her Majesty's Government was that it must be abandoned. The conquests of Mehemet Ali, the greatest of recent Rulers of Egypt, must be given up. What he did, and what the Khedive Ismail did, to suppress the traffic in slaves must now give way to slave-hunters and slave-dealers. But there were found still in Egypt conscientious and independent men. The Prime Minister, Cherif Pasha, and his Government refused to do that, and they were dismissed by a telegram from Downing Street; and all that was done, so far as they were informed, without the knowledge and consent of the Sultan. He could not conceive any state of affairs which could give rise to more serious apprehensions than the present condition of Egypt and the dependencies of the Soudan. He wished to know whether the Ottoman Government had been consulted at all in the matter? It might well be asked, What had become of Treaties? What had become of International Law? Were they to follow in Egypt the example of France in Tunis? Were they to take possession of, and then give away to those in open rebellion, the territory of a friendly Power, without any sanction or consent on the part of that Power? And were they to continue to impose conditions as to where the troops of the Sovereign of the country, in the event of their being sent, were to be disembarked—to dictate where they might go and where they might not go? Her Majesty's Government did not seem to have realized the fact that they had been the Government of Egypt, rightly or wrongly, for the last 18 months, and they still had not become awakened to the fact that the Government of Egypt, whoever they might be, had not the power of ceding the smallest portion of Egyptian territory. The result was that a country equal in size to more than the half of Europe had been ceded to those who were in open rebellion against their Sovereign, and by a Proclamation of General Gordon their leader had been made Ruler of Kordofan, while large sums of money had been sent by this country which might possibly be employed to encourage the revolt. He thought they had reason to ask for some explanation of the course which had been adopted by Her Majesty's Government.

Moved, "That a copy of the Convention of 1877, relative to the traffic in slaves in Central Africa, be reprinted."—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, although I do not quite admit the accuracy of the historical narrative the noble Earl has given of our conduct during the last 18 months, yet I think your Lordships will see that I cannot be called upon night after night, in answer to separate Questions, to go over the arguments in defence of our conduct which were used on the first night of the Session and afterwards, when the Vote of Censure was moved by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury). A debate followed, which I think, on one side and on the other, was not unworthy of the character of this House, and it was closed, to my great regret, by a majority condemning the conduct of the Government. With regard to the Question which the noble Earl has put, I have only to state this—that it is unnecessary to remind your Lordships that when the Government first asked the Porte to interfere in Egypt the natural course, no doubt, would have been that the Sultan should have intervened and assisted the Khedive in putting down the rebellion. But, under circumstances which I need not advert to, that course was not taken, and the task was left to England alone. That task having been undertaken, the fact of our subsequent armed occupation of the country, although for a time only, no doubt threw very great responsibility upon Her Majesty's Government. In discharge of that responsibility we have endeavoured to do nothing which would infringe the Sultan's powers, limited as they were. But your Lordships must be aware that under the very pressing circumstances arising from time to time, and bearing in mind that hitherto the reproach to the Government had been that they had acted too slowly instead of too fast, it is perfectly impossible that we could have consulted the Sultan upon those steps. With regard to the Correspondence that has taken place, some little time ago I received a very courteous despatch from the Porte, stating that the Sultan had a great desire to come to a complete understanding with England on the subject of Egypt. I answered it, I hope, in the same tone and with the same feeling, saying that we on our side would be very glad to come to such an understanding, and that I wished to know on what basis the Sultan proposed that the understanding should be arrived at. These letters will, I hope, be in your Lordships' hands next week. In answer to my communication I received a long despatch from the Porte, in which a basis for an understanding was laid down, which, however, Her Majesty's Government did not consider a practicable basis, and though I cannot go into details, I may say I do not think it is a basis which any of your Lordships would have thought a practicable one in the present case. The general purport of the despatch was to ask for the views of Her Majesty's Government. Our views have now been sent to the Porte, and in due time they will certainly be made known to your Lordships. With regard to the demand of the noble Earl for copies of the Convention of 1877, I have to state that copies of it were presented to this House at the time. I hardly think that it would be worth while to reprint the Convention now; but we have some copies of it still unused at the Foreign Office, and I shall be happy to make arrangements for the supply of a certain number to your Lordships.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he did not wish to trouble the noble Earl with any renewal of the arguments which had been used in the past; but the point upon which he was concerned was one which he thought had not been discussed in either House. The noble Earl had referred to the Convention of 1877 relative to the slave traffic, and he understood the noble Earl to say that there were copies of that Convention in existence which would be distributed. The point of importance in regard to the Convention arose from the extraordinary Proclamation of General Gordon which had found its way into the public Press. There were several versions of it, but he supposed that printed in the Parliamentary Papers might be accepted as the authentic one. That Convention of 1877 was a very grave and important document. It laid down the direct prohibition of the slave traffic, and provided that anyone who was either directly or indirectly engaged in that traffic should be punished. General Gordon's Proclamation, if its meaning was properly understood, was certainly a very startling commentary on that Convention. It was not his wish to utter a word which might be construed into a detraction of the high character of General Gordon, whom he regarded with the greatest respect and admiration; nor did he for one moment wish that anything should be said in their Lordships' House which could have the effect of hampering General Gordon in the military operations in which he was engaged. But, whatever might be one's regard and admiration for a person placed in these actual circumstances, he thought that, if their Lordships were to remain absolutely silent about the Proclamation, they would not be fulfilling their duty. General Gordon, it was to be remembered, did not speak as a private individual. He had been intrusted, in a great emergency, with an important foreign Mission. He had been sent out to Egypt by the Government, and it must be assumed that he had gone out in full possession of their views. It was a matter of grave importance that a man who spoke as the mouthpiece of England should have held the language which General Gordon used in this Proclamation with regard to the Slave Trade. In a reported explanation of the matter, which might or might not be authentic, General Gordon was represented as drawing a distinction between slave traffic and slave holding. Now there was, of course, a distinction between the two, but in practice it would be found extremely difficult to draw the line. He would challenge anyone to read the Proclamation through and to say that, taken as a whole, it did not include traffic in slaves as well as slaveholding. What, he should like to know, was to be the policy of the Government on this subject? If there was any one point on which the judgment of England had been clear and emphatic, it was in its utter abhorrence of anything approaching to the Slave Trade. Now, either the Government must approve or disapprove of General Gordon's Proclamation; and, whatever might be said of it, this was certain—that if they approved of it, they ought to have no objection to stating their reasons for that approval. But if they disapproved his conduct, it was clear that they must have allowed him to go to the Soudan without clear instructions about a question which was certain to come to the front. Some years ago, a Circular in regard to slavery was issued by the late Mr. Ward Hunt. Although that Circular might have contained some incautious expressions, no one in his senses imagined that Mr. Ward Hunt intended to do anything that would have the effect of encouraging slavery; but the Circular was subjected to very severe and bitter criticisms on the part of the noble Lords opposite and their Friends in "another place." Now, by a strange revolution in the wheel of accident, Nemesis had come upon the Government who, at the time to which he referred, were in Opposition, for they found themselves placed in circumstances similar to those in which their opponents were. He did not intend to criticize the Government bitterly; but, if Mr. Ward Hunt was severely censured for an incautious expression in a Slave Circular, what might not be said about the formal and open recognition by the Representative of the present Government of that which had hitherto been denounced in England as something approaching nearly to piracy and murder? There was only one other matter to which he wished to refer. In the explanation which General Gordon was supposed to have given, he was represented as stating that—

> "The Government, with the consent of the Khedive, has decided to separate the Soudan from Egypt, and the two Governments have sent me to carry out the evacuation and to restore the Native Government."

He was also supposed to have made the extraordinary statement that the separation of the Soudan abrogated all Treaties made with reference to it between the authorities at Cairo and Foreign Governments. The state of things to which he had called attention required explanation, and if it were passed over in silence their Lordships might be considered guilty of neglect. He would only add that he was sure it would be welcome to their Lordships to hear from the Government that the interpretation which he had reluctantly put on the documents submitted to the House was not a correct one.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, my noble Friend has asked whether Her Majesty's Government approve or disapprove the Proclamation recently issued by General Gordon? The only answer I can give at the present time is a very short and simple one. Your Lordships know, for they have been published in the Blue Book, the instructions which General Gordon received—they were of the briefest possible character — and apart from those instructions Her Majesty's Government have left him a discretion practically of an unlimited kind. This Proclamation was not issued in obedience to any instructions sent from here, and, in point of fact, the first intimation which the Government received on the subject was derived from sources with which your Lordships are familiar. We have no doubt that the newspapers contain the accurate text of the Proclamation itself. We have had some brief telegraphic statements regarding it; but we have not got that full information of the circumstances which led to it, of the condition of the people to whom it was addressed, and of the general state of the case with which General Gordon had to deal, which, as your Lordships will, I think, agree with me, is absolutely necessary before we can form a judgment on the action of General Gordon. In saying this, I express no doubt whatever as to the action of General Gordon. Everybody is aware, not only of his devotion to the cause of freedom, but of the detestation which his whole life has expressed of the Slave Trade. Looking to what he has done in China and elsewhere, and to the marvellous influence which he has exercised over the minds of Natives in various parts of the world, I think we cannot entertain any doubt of his great capacity for dealing with persons of this kind, and, in the absence of more information than we now possess, he is entitled to the confidence which is reposed in him by the Government and the country. If I were to put forward a theory of the circumstances of the case, I should suppose what occurred to be something of this kind—that General Gordon found a very strong opposition to the present Egyptian Government, as being under European influence and to the English Advisers of the Egyptian Government. Most likely one of the favourite topics of those who endeavoured to create hostility to England was the well-known opposition of England and the English Government to slavery and the Slave Trade, and I think it extremely probable that the emissaries of the Mahdi were telling these people that the English had taken possession of Egypt, and that their property in slaves would be at once taken from them. It is quite obvious that any report of that kind would operate disadvantageously to the cause General Gordon was endeavouring to promote, and it would be only natural that he would take the most public means of contradicting it. It has been said that the Proclamation legalizes slave-hunting. That to my mind is simply impossible. The circumstances do not require us to resort to any explanation of that kind. Your Lordships will acknowledge that there is a very wide distinction between the institution of domestic slavery and the Slave Trade carried on by force in the adjoining countries. What I suppose his Proclamation refers to is simply the right of owning slaves, which by the law of the country they now possess. If anyone had been trying to put into the minds of the people of Khartoum and the Soudan that their property in slaves was to be confiscated without notice and without compensation, a proclamation would be necessary to give them the assurance that they would not be disturbed in the exercise of their present customs, but that which was legal now would continue to be legal. With regard to the other charge, that the abandonment of the Soudan is fatal to all the efforts made of late years to put down the Slave Trade, I do not at all admit that that is its necessary or probable effect. I have read General Gordon's book, Sir Samuel Baker's book, and almost everything written of late years on the subject, and nothing, I think, can be more clear than that all the efforts made to keep down the Slave Trade in the Soudan in recent years have ended, if not in complete failure, at least in very partial and doubtful success. Wherever the Governor General was present the trade was checked; but whenever he left one part of the country to go to another the evil sprang up again in his absence. I do not believe you will be able to put an end to the Slave Trade in the Soudan by direct measures. What you can do is to stop the traffic of slaves across the Red Sea; you can stop the introduction of slaves into Egypt and into Arabia; that is the only method by which you can make effectual progress. There is nothing unreasonable in thinking that the Proclamation of General Gordon is in no way contrary to that object. As to the question whether the Egyptian Government, without the consent of the Sultan, had a right to give up these Provinces of the Soudan, I think the answer is quite conclusive. Whatever may be the nominal relations between the Porte and the Government of Egypt, you can not force Egypt to retain a part of its territory which it is absolutely unable to hold. I do not admit that our relations with Egypt have had anything to do in reality with the evacuation of the Soudan. I believe that the insurrection of the Mahdi would have made the evacuation of the Soudan fully necessary whether we had been there or not; and it is not fair to charge upon our temporary occupation in Egypt the abandonment of a Province which Egypt would have been very much stronger in not attempting to conquer or to hold.

Viscount BURY said, he did not wish to say anything on the subject of General Gordon's Mission, because anyone who should do so at present would subject himself to a great responsibility. Anyone, he thought, who read the Proclamation must own that General Gordon had reserved to himself the right to exclude slave-hunting, and that it was only to the domestic institution of slavery his Proclamation referred. But it was a very different thing for an English

Governor General to say nothing about slavery, which was not under his control, and which he could not prevent, and in the name of England to say that slavery should be legal. The reason why he rose just now was to push a little further the question raised by the noble Earl (Earl De La Warr), who asked what was the position of the Porte with regard to England in the Soudan at this moment? Another question of equal importance was, what was the position of England in the Soudan and the Red Sea littoral? We were sending out a military expedition of considerable extent and importance, and we had a right to ask what was the object of that expedition, and what were we going to do? At the time of the battle of Teb, when General Baker was defeated, we certainly were at war in the Soudan; but the circumstances had changed, and Her Majesty's Government, acting through the Governor General, had proclaimed the Mahdi Sultan of a great portion of the Soudan. They did not know the geographical limits of that district. If a line had been drawn between the Soudan Proper and that part of the Soudan which Her Majesty's Government was supposed to hold, he should like to know whether Osman Digna had been informed of the limits of the district which had been conceded to the Mahdi, whether he had been informed that there was a line which he must not cross, and that the fact of his having crossed it was a declaration of war against England? It seemed to him that as the Mahdi had been formally recognized by the English Government, and as slavery had been allowed to exist in a modified form, the whole difficulty between this country and the Mahdi had been solved. The difficulty had been solved in a most practical way by the almost unconditional surrender of the English Government, and by the Proclamation of the powers spiritual and temporal of the Mahdi. There was only one thing which had been reserved by the English Governor General, and that was the right of getting himself and the garrison out of Khartoum without fighting if he could, or, in the last resort, by force of arms. It was quite possible that the Mahdi, flushed with his victory, and elated by the recognition which had been given him, resented this reservation, and in that case he might order Osman Digna to continue his military operations. Under those circumstances it was to be regretted that this country had not an Army on the spot large enough to enforce the Mahdi to accept terms. But it might be that Osman Digna was making war on his own behalf. In such a case as that, why did not the Government make peace with him in the same way as they had done with the Mahdi? He did not recommend the Government to adopt that course; but he wished to know what the difference was between the case of the Mahdi and the case of Osman Digna? It was quite true that the Mahdi had about 30,000 men, and that Osman Digna had only 4,000 or 6,000 men. The man who had the 30,000 men the Government made a Sultan, but the man who had the 4,000 or 5,000 men they endeavoured to cut to pieces. So far as he could see, the circumstances of the two cases were the same, and he should like to know why a line had been drawn? What was that line? If it was a geographical line, the House should be told where it was. If it was a numerical line, they ought to know what number of men had been fixed upon. If it was a moral line, the Government should tell them where the difference was to be found between the two cases. Why was Osman Digna to be destroyed while the greater culprit was left alone? At the present time this country was fighting with Osman Digna. But the Government had not stated why the military operations were being carried on and to what extent they would be conducted. British blood and treasure were being poured out. Why? He supposed it was to relieve the garrison of Trinkitat; but it appeared to him that if the Government were now right in taking that course they were wrong when Sinkat fell. Why was not Sinkat defended? Why did they allow Hicks Pasha to go forth into the desert to be cut to pieces? Why did they allow Moncrieff to be murdered? Why was Baker Pasha sent into the desert with an insufficient force? It had been stated that there was no inconsistency in the policy of the Government; but how did they reconcile the two points he had raised? Why did they hold their hands and watch those brave men fall? Why did they at one time look on unmoved when horrors, worse than Bulgarian horrors, were being perpetrated, and now advance into the Soudan? He hoped the Government would inform the House what the expedition now being sent out was intended to do.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the capacity of Her Majesty's Government for answering Questions appears to be exhausted. I shall, therefore, merely venture on one or two comments on this interesting conversation. One of the subjects we have been engaged on is the curious Slave Trade Proclamation of General Gordon, and the question that is occupying our minds is an interpretation of the very strange words it contains. I admit that, if you are to judge it merely by the antecedents and character of General Gordon, it is improbable, and may, indeed, be treated as impossible, that he should designedly give encouragement to the Slave Trade. On the other hand, the words, as they stand, are perfectly unmeaning unless they do give that encouragement. What does General Gordon say—

> "Knowing that you regret the severe measures taken by the Government for the suppression of the slave traffic by decrees and conventions, I confer upon you this right, that henceforth none shall interfere with your property."

If the words "none shall interfere with your property" stood alone, it would be open to you to contend that it was merely the property in slaves which was in question; but the preamble is wholly unmeaning, and entirely out of place, if there is no reference to the slave traffic in the Proclamation. What strikes me as remarkable is that we should be discussing the meaning of General Gordon as if he were an ancient author, or far removed from us in time or place, or as if there was no possibility of ascertaining his meaning except by puzzling over the words he has used. The noble Earl advanced what he calls a theory upon this point which is very ingenious, but which is inconsistent with the words of General Gordon. Does it not seem to strike everybody that, as we are within six hours' communication with General Gordon by telegraph, and that as this Proclamation has been known for a fortnight, there would have been no difficulty in ascertaining what General Gordon's reasons were, and what he meant? A word to a clerk at the Foreign Office would have obtained the information, and I can only conclude that Her Majesty's Government think it much better to be without that information in order that they may indulge in interpretations of General Gordon's meaning, and shelter themselves behind his well-known character. I do not in the least dispute, I render all homage to his high character; but I think I may, without irreverence, suggest that it is possible that General Gordon may make a mistake, especially when he is acting under the instructions of Her Majesty's Government. Therefore, I cannot accept an interpretation which is simply based on a reference to his character; and I must regret that Her Majesty's Government did not take the very obvious means of ascertaining the truth of this matter by conferring with General Gordon himself. The other part of the conversation refers to the position of this country towards the rights of the Sultan, or, as I shall put it more strongly, towards the rights of Europe as guaranteed by the Treaty of Paris. General Gordon's Proclamations, about which we know so little, and about whose meaning we have various interpretations, are very far-reaching. It not only re-establishes the Slave Trade, but it tears up the Treaty of Paris. Her Majesty's Government announced in those Proclamations that the Soudanese were to be handed back to Native Rulers, thus detaching the Soudan from the Ottoman Empire, and, therefore, violating the guarantee which Her Majesty, in concert with the other Powers of Europe, gave, under the Treaty of Paris, and which was again sanctioned by the Treaty of Berlin. I shall be curious to know what negotiations have taken place with the Powers, what negotiations have taken place with the Sultan, and to what extent these announcements are authorized by Her Majesty's Government. According to a telegram in *The Observer*, General Gordon has issued a Proclamation informing the inhabitants of Khartoum that the Commander of the Faithful intends to send a great army to conquer the country. To conquer the country! Why, it is a part of the country which belongs to the Sultan. This is equivalent to a German officer going to Ireland and telling the people that the English are going to conquer that country. The English Government is more powerful in the Soudan than the Turkish Government; but the question of International right remains exactly the same. There is a further consideration that I would impress on the noble Earl. In 1870 Russia thought fit to do what General Gordon tries to do now, to tear up the Treaty of Paris; she claimed for herself the right which the Treaty withheld of putting ships on the Black Sea. England protested, and England was finally satisfied with forcing Russia to acknowledge and join in a general declaration that no one Power was able, without the consent of the other Powers, to withdraw from an arrangement into which all had commonly entered. Her Majesty's Government made a good deal of this diplomatic victory, and said it was a great moral triumph, that though they had not been able to induce Russia to go back from a course upon which she had entered, they had, at least extorted from her this homage to the public law of Europe. But now you have done exactly what Russia did in 1870; you have done it, not only by tearing up the Treaty of Paris, but also by tearing up the moral declaration you took so much credit to yourselves for having extorted from Russia at the time. I quite understand that in his practical executive action, General Gordon should be allowed a free hand, and should not be interfered with; but in this Proclamation he speaks in the name of the Queen of England. That which he sanctions now is not simply a measure for the pacification of the Soudan; this Proclamation will bind us in the future; it will be quoted against us in the future as involving the honour and good faith of the course which England may afterwards follow. You may depend upon it that, if for the sake of a temporary advantage, however important, you have tampered with the Slave Trade, your moral authority will be much diminished when you appeal to other Powers on the question. You may depend upon it that if, for the sake of solving a momentary difficulty, you have violently torn up one of the Treaties which are the bases of the public law of Europe, you will find that in other parts of the Turkish Dominions other Powers will not be slow to follow your example.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I cannot help expressing some regret that the noble Lord should have thought that any public interest could be served by endeavouring, during the course of the arduous Mission of General Gordon, to call attention to every report and rumour, more or less authentic or otherwise, which comes to this country by letter or private telegram of General Gordon's sayings and doings, and to criticize them as if the Mission were over, and as if we had arrived at definite results. Your Lordships are not in a position at present to pass judgment upon them, and if such things are to go on, I am afraid that the opinions of not a few of us as to the advantages conferred upon the world by the invention of the electric telegraph may be a little altered. There never was a case in which a political mission of a more arduous and difficult character, more demanding reasonable confidence and forbearance, was confided to any man; but from the beginning of the Session the noble Marquess has, unfortunately, thought it his duty to say a good many things which, in our opinion, are calculated to throw difficulties in General Gordon's way. Yet the noble Marquess expresses great confidence in the high character, the upright purpose, and the great abilities of General Gordon, and entertains a hope that in the end all these things may turn out right. Her Majesty's Government must decline to be cross-examined upon everything General Gordon says or does. We continue to place confidence in him, the same confidence which we placed in him when we originally sent him out. We believe that General Gordon knows the people he has to deal with, their manners, their language, and their habits of mind, and that the Proclamations which he addresses to them are much more likely to be well understood there than they are here, and to be adapted to meet the necessities of the case he has to deal with; and I do think the criticisms which have been passed upon this particular Proclamation are as devoid of reason as they are of political wisdom. I confess I was very much struck by the difference between the views of the noble Marquess and those of the noble Viscount who preceded him as to the meaning to be attached by reasonable men to the words of that Proclamation dealing with slavery; both desired to be reasonable and to do justice, and yet no two views could possibly be more different. Applying his great powers of criticism to the document, the noble Marquess more than suggests that the natural meaning of it goes beyond the subject of domestic slavery and enters upon the larger field of the slave traffic. To the noble Viscount, on the other hand, nothing was more clear—there was no question about it—than that General Gordon referred to domestic slavery only, and did not intend to give any sanction to the slave traffic. I agree with the noble Viscount. The words which the noble Marquess adverted to in the preamble of the Proclamation give emphasis to the difference of the language in what I may call the operative part. What General Gordon says, in effect, is this—that he has the sincerest desire to adopt a course of action which shall lead to public tranquillity, and he knows the uneasiness of the people at the severe measures taken by our Government for the suppression of the slave traffic, and the seizure and punishment of all concerned according to certain Conventions and Decrees; and then, in order to allay the consequences of that alarm, he says —"I confer upon you these rights"—not to carry on the slave traffic, not to do the things against which the Convention and Decrees were directed—but

> "That henceforth none shall interfere with your property; whoever has slaves shall have full right to their services and full control over them."

To my mind, it is perfectly clear that that refers to the right to existing property in slaves which the Egyptian Government had not abrogated, which the proceedings taken by our Government had not abrogated, and which it would have been most dangerous to the objects of his Mission to have interfered with. I venture to say, distinctly, that these, and these only, are the rights which General Gordon declares it is his intention not to interfere with. Is not that distinction one which we ourselves have always recognized? Everyone all over the world has recognized the distinction between the actual holding of slaves in a country where unfortunately the institution of domestic slavery does exist, and the prosecution of the traffic of which the object is to reduce free men to slavery. When we acquired a Protectorate over certain territories in the Malay Peninsula, domestic slavery existed there, and we did not imagine that it was wise or possible summarily to abolish it; accordingly, it was continued for several years, partly under the late and partly under the present Administration. The noble Marquess says—"Have you no communication from General Gordon as to the meaning of the Proclamation?" Why, the noble Lord who introduced the subject referred to communications which had been published in the newspapers, and in these it appeared that General Gordon himself drew the same distinction, and said it was the domestic institution already existing, and not the Slave Trade, or slave-hunting, to which the Proclamation referred.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I did not ask whether the newspapers had received such despatches. I asked whether the Government had not received any.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: Yes; we have received, in an authentic form, the same information. As to the suggested abrogation of existing Treaties, when we are called upon we will discuss the precise meaning of any words supposed to have that effect; but to my mind it is obvious that General Gordon could have meant, and did mean, nothing but this—that when Egypt withdraws, as we have advised and urged her to do, from the attempt to govern the great territory of the Soudan, Egypt can no longer by any possibility be required to enforce those Treaties in the territory from which she has withdrawn; and, therefore, as between us and Egypt, no Treaty is abrogated, but the execution of these Treaties by Egypt in the Soudan will simply have become impossible when she has withdrawn from that territory. As to the supposed interference with the Sovereignty of the Porte, nothing has been done by this Government or by General Gordon to prevent the assertion as to the Soudan of any rights the Porte may have had. They were nominal rights; as far as they had any reality, they existed only by delegation to the Government of Egypt. It cannot maintain them; and by the agreement of all, including the noble Marquess, it ought not to have been advised to maintain them. If I rightly understood the criticism upon Her Majesty's Government in a former debate, it was this, that we ought, much sooner than we did, to have advised the Government of Egypt to withdraw from the attempt to assert authority over the Soudan. Perhaps of all criticisms, after the light which we have obtained by the course of events, that may have been the most plausible; but now, at all events, Egypt can no longer exercise a delegated authority in the Soudan. The Ottoman Porte has not, that I am aware of, expressed any desire that Turkey should, at its own expense, and with its own troops, and without charge upon Egypt, reconquer the Soudan. I cannot think myself that any friend of the Ottoman Empire would advise such a course. At all events, no such thing has been attempted, or hitherto proposed. We have to deal with the actual position in the Soudan as it is, and we must look to the local circumstances and the necessity of the case to redeem the Egyptian garrisons from their position there, if that is possible, and to give a chance of settled order. In the interests of humanity, in the interests of the peace of Egypt, and in the interests of the Ottoman Empire itself, we must endeavour to use such local resources and local means as we can find for the purpose of doing the best that can be done in this difficult situation. We have confidence, and we believe the country will have confidence, in General Gordon. The noble Viscount (Viscount Bury) would, as it seems to me, have produced most of his questions with better effect in the debate upon which the House lately divided than now. He says that is what he actually did; and, if that is so, why did the noble Viscount reproduce them now? Seeing that military operations may now be going on in the Soudan, when we are asked why we have done this or that, or why we do not do one thing or another, and when General Gordon is called in some of these questions an English Governor General in the Soudan, and a number of other assumptions are made, the accuracy of which we cannot admit, and which are contrary to our declared intentions and policy, we decline to enter into those questions at all. Everyone knows that our present task on the Red Sea Coast is to defend Suakin, which is threatened with attack. We desire also, if possible, to relieve the beleagured garrisons. It is, and has been throughout, the policy of Egypt and of this country to retain Suakin and the Red Sea forts, and it is in furtherance of that policy, and of that policy only, that we are now carrying on military operations in that portion of the country.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, that all the difficulties which the Government had encountered in the Eastern Soudan were difficulties of their own creation; but though the Government were open to attack in many directions, and had many joints in their harness, he did not think that any attack should be made upon them in consequence of the Proclamation of General Gordon. It ought to be remembered that it was not a normal state of things which existed in the Soudan, and that General Gordon had gone out on a forlorn hope, and that he had succeeded in his Mission beyond all expectation. General Gordon was a single-minded man, whose whole life had shown him to be of all men the most vehement enemy of slavery.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

VISCOUNT BURY gave Notice that on Monday next, the 3rd of March, he would ask the Government, Whether this country is engaged in war on the littoral of the Red Sea, and, if so, with whom; and if it is not engaged in war, what is the character of the operations in which English forces are now employed?

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—TELEGRAMS.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there was any truth in the report which had been circulated during the day that fighting had been going on since 7 o'clock in the morning?

EARL GRANVILLE, in reply, said, he had seen a Reuter's telegram which stated that there was a vague—he believed the word "vague" was used—report at Cairo that fighting had been going on this morning at El Teb, but that nothing confirmatory of this had been received. As far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned they had no information at all.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to
Monday next, a quarter
before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 29*th February*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBERS SWORN—Hon. Murray Edward Gordon Finch-Hatton, *for* Lincoln County (Southern Division); John Deasy, esquire, *for* City of Cork.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4); CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Mr. Speaker's Retirement* [123]; Revision of Jurors and Voters Lists (Dublin County) [124].

Second Reading—Bankruptcy Appeals (County Courts) [118].

Third Reading—Brokers (City of London)* (69), and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

BULGARIA—THE VARNA RAILWAY.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether two Delegates of the Bulgarian Government, who are at present in this Country, have been in communication with Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting a settlement of the Varna Railway question on a basis other than that established by the tenth article of the Treaty of Berlin; and, whether, in view of the statement made by Her Majesty's Government, on 26th July 1883, to the effect that—

> "Her Majesty's Government had lost no opportunity of pressing the matter on the Bulgarian Government, and that they trusted that, on the return of the Prince of Sofia, steps would be at once taken to settle the question. . . . . And they have no doubt that means could be found to provide the funds required, and they believe that the Bulgarian Government, who are themselves deeply interested in the loyal execution of engagements entered into on their behalf, will see the necessity of meeting the obligation which their independent position now entails upon them,"

Her Majesty's Government is now prepared to urge upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of at once fulfilling their obligations to the bond and shareholders of the Varna Railway, as imposed on them by Article 10 of the Treaty of Berlin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, negotiations are now proceeding in this country between the Company and the Bulgarian Government, pending which action on the part of Her Majesty's Government is temporarily suspended. Papers on the subject will be laid before the House.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATION FOR FAIR RENTS IN CO. KERRY.

MR. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Gerald Leahy, Bridget M'Coy, and Patrick Steartney, tenants of the Reverend Richard Fitzgerald, Tarbert, county Kerry, made application to the Land Commission to get a fair rent fixed, in 1881; whether the date of the service of the originating notices was the 24th December 1881; whether the hearing of these cases has yet taken place; if he could explain the reason; whether these tenants are paying a rent considerably above the value of their respective holdings; and, whether he can give any idea as regards the length of time which may elapse before these cases can be reached by the Land Commission?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commissioners inform me that no tenants bearing these names have made applications to have fair rents fixed.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PRESSURE OF SCHOOL WORK.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the reports on the case of the boy at West Bromwich, who is alleged to have committed suicide in consequence of the pressure of school work; and on the case of Sophia Raybould, who is alleged by the doctor who attended her to have died from brain disease superinduced by overstrain at school; and on the case of the two pupil teachers who are alleged by Her Majesty's inspector to have been killed by overwork in London, are yet ready to be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, the Reports on the first two cases have been received, and we are expecting the Report from the London School Board on the other cases in a day or two, when the whole shall be laid upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT—DONCASTER SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Postmaster General, Whether William Heap, of Bentley, Doncaster, was on 2nd January elected to the local School Board at the head of the poll; whether the said William Heap at that time held a sub-office under the Postmaster General, with 10*s.* per week for the delivery of letters; and, whether the said William Heap has since been required by the Post Office authorities to resign his seat on the School Board, under threat of dismissal?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, it is the case, as implied by the Question of my hon. Friend, that Mr. Heap, of Bentley, was instructed to resign his seat on the local School Board; but this instruction was given under a misapprehension, and as soon as it became known at headquarters directions were given to revoke it. Mr. Heap has been informed that, so far as the Department is concerned, there is no objection to his remaining a member of the School Board, so long as his official duties are not interfered with thereby.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT—APPEALS IN THE IRISH LAND COURTS.

MR. P. MARTIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 16th of August last, he admitted in the House the grievances endured by suitors in the Court of the Land Commission from the then accumulation of pending appeals, and undertook that the Government would try and devise a remedy, and the matter should have their most careful attention; is not the appeal list at present far heavier than it was in August, amounting to 8,600 cases to be heard; is there any reasonable ground for believing the list can be finally disposed of before the expiration of some three years; have any communications passed between the Land Commission and the Government in reference to the great injury caused by the delay incident to the disposal of these appeals; can he state what have been the nature of these communications or suggestions; and, will he have any objection to lay such communications upon the Table?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is unfortunately true that the appeal list is heavier now than it was in August last. The Government have had various communications with the Land Commissioners on the subject of diminishing the number of appeals, and of accelerating the mode of progress of the Commissioners. After very careful consideration, no new plan which would be effective has been yet found; but the Commissioners are doing their utmost to hear and dispose of appeals as fast as is consistent with due regard to the interests of those involved. It is impossible to lay on the Table of the House the Correspondence which has taken place between the Government and the Commissioners on this subject, as it is of a confidential character.

MR. P. MARTIN asked whether the total number of appeals heard last year was not 2,000, and when did the right hon. Gentleman expect that the remaining 8,000 would be disposed of? That Question was on the Paper, and had not been answered.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he did not see anything in the Question about 2,000 cases having been heard last year. No doubt the hon. Member had stated the number accurately.

MR. P. MARTIN said, his Question was when the Government expected the remaining 8,000 cases to be concluded?

[No reply was given.]

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CASTLEWELLAN PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 1st January ult., at the Castlewellan (county Down) Petty Sessions, in a case against four boys, for having caused obstruction in the street, the evidence was of such a character that the solicitors for the accused appealed to the bench to censure the prosecuting constable, but Lord Annesley, the only justice present, whilst declaring that there was no evidence, said he believed the boys were guilty, and inflicted the utmost penalty upon them; and, whether the penalty will be remitted?

MR. TREVELYAN: The defendants in this case were of the "corner boy" class, and were aged from 20 to 25 years. They were charged with placing large stones, weighing up to 112 lbs., across the street at 11 o'clock at night.

It is not true that the solicitor for the defence appealed to the Bench to censure the prosecuting constable. He merely applied that costs should be given against him, which is not an unusual application. It is not true that the presiding magistrate declared that there was no evidence. He stated that the evidence clearly satisfied him of the defendants' guilt, but that it was not strong owing to the reluctant manner in which the witnesses—some of whom were accomplices of the defendants—answered the questions put to them. No witnesses were produced for the defence. The penalty imposed was a fine of 10*s*., and I see no reason for asking the Lord Lieutenant to remit it.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, With reference to the declaration of the Solicitor General for Ireland that the condition of the Irish magistracy was not the fault of the Executive, and that, if suitable persons were recommended for the Commission of the Peace, the Lord Chancellor would not be slow to exercise his inherent powers; and, whether he will indicate, for the public guidance, by whom, and in what manner, such recommendations should be made, whether by public memorial or resolution, and by the Municipal Councils, the public boards, the clergy, the electors, the ratepayers, or the community at large?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is open to any individual, or number of individuals, to bring under the notice of the Lord Chancellor allegations that a fit and proper person for the Commission of the Peace has been brought under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant of any county where the appointment of a magistrate is needed or required, and that the Lord Lieutenant of such county has unreasonably declined to recommend the appointment of such person to the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor, in such a case, will make inquiry into the allegations, and if he finds that they are supported by the facts, will consider the propriety of placing the persons so dealt with in the Commission of the Peace. It is not intended to lay down any rule as to the people or body of people who have a right to make an application of that sort.

MR. SEXTON asked whether it would be open to individuals to make representations to the Lord Chancellor direct?

MR. TREVELYAN: Not until the case has been laid before the Lord Lieutenant.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—COMPENSATION.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any individual has been exempted in the case of a levy for compensation, under the Crimes Act, on the inhabitants of Miltown Malbay, county Clare?

MR. TREVELYAN: No, Sir.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — DEFICIENCY OF SCHOOL PLACES (METROPOLIS).

MR. BOORD asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether a requisition has been addressed by the Committee of the Privy Council on Education to the School Board for London asking for a Return of the deficiency of School places in the Metropolis; whether such deficiency was stated by the School Board in their reply, dated 14th February last, to amount to 45,153 places; and, whether, on the opening of the Carlton Road Board School, Kentish Town, on the 16th instant, he stated that the deficiency of places in the Metropolis amounted to 100,000; and, if so, could he explain the discrepancy between his statement and that of the London School Board?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, there is no discrepancy between the Return to which the hon. Member refers and my statement in this House last year and elsewhere subsequently, that about 100,000 school places are still lacking in the Metropolis. The Return is one that is filled up annually by all School Boards. It sets forth the accommodation provided in all schools throughout the district, the number of children to be provided for, and the actual deficiency of school places. The London School Board Return of the 14th instant is quite in agreement with the official estimates of the Department, and is as follows:—Permanent places, 555,123; temporary places, 16,006—total, 568,129. Children to be provided for after requisite reductions, 613,282; deficiency, 45,153. To this must be added the temporary places, 16,006, giving a deficiency on the gross number of places throughout the Metropolitan area of 61,159. This is assuming that surplus places in one district are available for another, and that the accommodation and the fees are suitable for the children resident in the district, and that you could force any child into any vacant place in any school wherever situated. If the hon. Member will refer to the Education Report of last year, page 13, he will find that the estimated deficiency was calculated at about 132,000. Sir Francis Sandford, the late Secretary of the Department, has to-day put the figures in my hands verifying his calculations. In the Statistical Report of the London School Board for November last, the projected accommodation is set down as 96,770.

MR. W. H. SMITH inquired whether the provisions made by the London School Board went below the age of five years, or whether it meant children between the ages of three and five?

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the estimate was obliged to go below the age of five, because there were 400,000 children on the register of schools in England and Wales between three and five, and the Department had always paid for those children. It was accordingly necessary to make a certain amount of provision for them.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LAND COURTS, CO. CLARE.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph, which appears in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 25th inst.:—

> "Widespread dissatisfaction prevails amongst the tenants in this part of the county as well as in Scariff, Feakle, and other places at the deadlock which has taken place in the hearing of their cases. At the court which was held here this week there were 125 cases listed, of which five cases were struck out for various causes, five more were settled, about twenty were heard on evidence, and all the rest were adjourned to Ennis, where only fiteen cases were gone into. The remainder were postponed to some future sitting; but when that may take place no one can divine, for the Commissioners that should continue to hear the Clare cases now in court, but still unheard, numbering upwards of 1,000, have been ordered to Limerick county to hear the cases still pending there. Several of the cases adjourned from Killaloe this week (where the chairman, Mr. Reeves, Q.C., sat only for a few hours) have been lodged for more than eighteen months. If a separate set of Commissioners were told off to-morrow for Clare county, they would not be able to dispose of the unheard cases for two years to come. Meanwhile the tenants will have to pay the old rack-rents in full;"

and, whether he will take steps to remedy the grievance?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, there is a good deal of inaccuracy in the paragraph quoted. The Killaloe list contained 108 cases, not 125 as stated. Of these, 29 were disposed of at the first day's sitting at Killaloe. More than half the cases on the list were nearer to Ennis than Killaloe. It was accordingly arranged, apparently with the approval of all the parties, and at the express request of the solicitor for some of the tenants, that the second day's sitting should be held at Ennis. Nineteen cases were heard at Ennis. The remaining four days of the sitting were unavoidably taking up in visiting farms, the district being remote and mountainous. The number of cases awaiting trial in the whole county of Clare is not upwards of 1,000, as stated, but 659.

NAVY—DOCKYARDS—PAY OF WORKMEN.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty have considered the case of the Hired Men in Her Majesty's Dockyards, with a view to re-arranging the basis on which their "gratuities" on retirement are calculated, and extending the age at which retirement becomes compulsory?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, that a number of questions affecting the pay of the workmen employed in Her Majesty's Dockyards, including the hired men, had been for some time under consideration, but had not yet been finally decided.

NAVY—OFFICERS OF MARINES.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty have decided that the provisions contained in Paragraph 34, section 5, of the Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army, relative to Confidential Reports, to the effect that—

> "Whenever an Officer is disadvantageously reported upon, he will be officially informed of the particulars of such Report by the Officer making it,"

are to apply to Officers of the Royal Marines; and, if not, what is the reason for withholding this privilege from them?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the paragraph in question is contained in the Queen's Regulations and Orders of the Army, the provisions of which do not apply to the Royal Marines unless specially ordered to apply by the Board of Admiralty. In such matters as that referred to the Royal Marines are naturally subject to Navy Rules, according to which it is in the discretion of the officer who makes a report whether or not its nature shall be communicated to the officer reported on.

NAVY—WORKMEN AT PLYMOUTH BREAKWATER.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the same consideration cannot be shown to the workmen employed at the Plymouth Breakwater (eight in number, with services ranging from 20 to 42 years) as was shown in 1880 and 1881 to others in the same position, who were then granted pensions, especially since the Admiralty did not dispute the claim to pension of these eight men until December 1883?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I regret to say that we have no power under the general Rules, which apply not only to the Admiralty but to all other Departments of the Public Service, to grant pensions to the men alluded to by my hon. Friend. The pensions awarded in 1880 and 1881 were given in error, and constitute no precedent for departing from the well-understood rule of the Service.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—NATIONAL LEAGUE MEETINGS.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is intended by the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland to institute prosecutions against the persons who, in spite of the proclamations issued by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, made persevering and continued attempts to hold meetings of the National League at Newry, at Castlewellan, at Cootehill, and at Blacklion, and also at Park, in the county of Derry? He also wished to ask whether the hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that at the meeting which was held a mile from Park, speeches were delivered by Mr. M'Loughlen and Mr. M'Closkey which occupied three columns in *The Derry Journal?*

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): Sir, reports which have appeared of persevering or continued attempts to hold meetings at Newry, Castlewellan, Cootehill, Blacklion, or Park are much exaggerated. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary, on the 22nd of this month, in reply to a Question from the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson), stated the facts within the knowledge of the Government as to the Castlewellan meeting, and intimated that the Government were advised that the attempt then made to address a few persons, who immediately dispersed on the approach of the military and police, did not afford sufficient ground for instituting a prosecution. Those observations equally apply to the other meetings mentioned in the Question, and the Government are advised that no sufficient grounds for instituting prosecutions exist. As regards the Question just put to me by the hon. Member, supplemental to that on the Paper, I believe, from the information before me, that the statements are equally exaggerated.

SUBMARINE CABLES—THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. PENDER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the International Conference of Delegates from thirty States, which sat in Paris in 1882 and 1883, on the subject of the protection of submarine telegraph cables, have come to any agreement; and, if so, whether it is likely that any convention will be concluded; and, if he will lay the Papers connected with same upon the Table of the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the draft of the Convention drawn up by the Delegates at the last Conference has since been under the consideration of the Governments represented. An agreement has now been arrived at, and as soon as the requisite authority has been received by the Plenipotentiaries of the several Powers in Paris, the Convention will be signed. The signature is expected to take place very shortly, and as soon as possible afterwards the Convention will be laid before Parliament.

IRELAND—COLLECTION OF CUSTOMS AT COLERAINE.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there is any truth in the statement in *The Civilian* newspaper of the 16th instant, that the Coleraine collection of Customs is about to be broken up; and, whether he will consider if this course may not act very prejudicially on a district which is expending so large a sum of money for the improvement of its port?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that the statement quoted was not correct, and he could assure the hon. Member that nothing would be done to the disadvantage of local interests.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883 — RATE OF INTEREST FOR LOANS.

MR. R. POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Local Government Board in Ireland charge £5 7*s.* 2*d.* interest on every £100 borrowed for the erection of labourers' dwellings; is it the case that the Labourers Act has been very little availed of, as the ratepayers object to pay so high a rate of interest; and, if he will consider the advisability of granting loans to sanitary authorities in Ireland upon the same terms as those set forth in "The Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act, 1880?"

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the terms for the loans were fixed by the Treasury, and not by the Local Government Board. It could not be said that "The Labourers' Act has been very little availed of." The sanitary authorities of 60 Unions had presented petitions praying for orders confirming about 570 schemes, which, if passed, would involve loans to the amount of £400,000 or £500,000. There did not appear to be any reasonable grounds for seeking to obtain these loans on the same terms as those on which loans were granted under the Relief of Distress Act, 1880, in the very exceptional circumstances then existing.

LAW AND JUSTICE (INDIA)—PROSECUTIONS IN MADRAS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will cause inquiry to be made as to the truth of the statement in *The Times of India* of the 1st inst. that Mr. Grant Duff has called on the Advocate General to give his opinion as to the advisability of prosecuting for sedition the Native members of the Cosmopolitan Club, Madras, for discussing politics within the precincts of the club?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Question of the hon. Member for Longford is based, as I understand, upon a report in a Bombay newspaper; and really, unless the hon. Member can give me some better authority, I hope he will not think me discourteous if I decline to trouble the Government of Madras with the inquiry suggested.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—MR. PRESTON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Eyre W. Preston, who lately resigned his office of Investigator of Tithe Rent Charge in obedience to the direction of the Irish Land Commissioners is still in the office of the Commission; and, if so, if he would explain the reason?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commission, thinking that Mr. Preston did not understand his tenure of office, gave him an opportunity of withdrawing his resignation, of which he availed himself. The matter having subsequently been brought under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant, without whose assent Mr. Preston could not be removed from office, His Excellency conferred with the Land Commissioners, when it was decided, having regard to the fact that Mr. Preston had been in the service of the State for 38 years without a complaint having been made against him, and to the fact that he never had anything to do with the action of the committee, upon which his name was placed without his authority, that the case would be fairly dealt with if Mr. Preston were reprimanded instead of being dismissed, provided that he undertook to withdraw his name from the committee of the Orange Hall and disavowed any responsibility for the terms of the appeal for funds, and further that he expressed regret at having allowed his name to appear, and undertook never in future as long as he should hold office under the Land Commission to take any public or prominent part in any political matters. With these conditions Mr. Preston has complied. Consequently, he is still in the employment of the Land Commission.

POST OFFICE—FEMALE TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Mr. HARRINGTON asked the Postmaster General, Why the employment of young women in the telegraph service is not more general in the provincial districts in Ireland, and why head offices like Waterford, Derry, Kilkenny, Limerick, Killarney, Clonmel, Mallow, and Tralee are not open to the employment of females; whether most of these offices are free from night duty, and suited to the employment of females; and, whether, in anticipation of increased traffic in the telegraph department, he will promote the establishment, in different towns in Ireland, of schools, such as that established in Limerick by Lord Emly when Postmaster General, for the training of competent telegraph clerks of both sexes?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, I can assure the hon. Member that I am most anxious to promote the employment of women in the telegraph and other branches of the Postal Service. One of the difficulties which often prevent their employment is the unsuitability of the buildings, as in many cases no separate accommodation can be provided. Care is taken to attend to this whenever new offices are rented or built. A few females are employed at four of the offices mentioned in the Question; only one of them is free from night duty. With regard to the establishment of additional telegraph schools in the Provinces, I may mention that it is the practice at most offices to train recruits in the instrument room, and this system has been found to answer well. The Limerick school was discontinued soon after its establishment, as it appeared that there was no sufficient demand for its services.

POST OFFICE (POSTAL ORDER SYSTEM), AUSTRIA.

Mr. MONK asked the Postmaster General, Whether Her Majesty's Government will enter into negotiations with the Austro-Hungarian Government, with a view to the establishment of a system of Post Office Orders or of Postal Orders for the transmission of small sums between this Country and Austria?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I may say that negotiations are already in progress with the Post Office of Austria-Hungary for the establishment of the money-order system between this country and Austria-Hungary, and I hope to be able soon to conclude a convention for that purpose.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—SIR EVELYN BARING.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in a telegram from *The Times* correspondent in Egypt, dated February 27th:—

> "No single measure down to an increase of the salary of a petty official is made without reference to Sir Evelyn Baring," and that "therefore one of two things is true, either Sir Evelyn Baring immediately interferes with the national business, contrary to orders, in which case he should be recalled, and the entire machinery of Government would collapse, or he is the sole responsible Governor of Egypt;"

and, whether he can state if this statement is correct in regard to the action of Sir Evelyn Baring; and, if so, whether he is acting in accordance with orders?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The position of Sir Evelyn Baring is defined in the Papers which have been laid before the House, and Her Majesty's Government have no reason to doubt his conforming himself to the instructions which he has received. In all matters of importance on which Sir Evelyn Baring thinks it necessary to give advice, it is expected that during our provisional armed occupation his advice will be followed.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—NON-PAYMENT OF THE SEED RATE.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If any person in Ireland can be deprived of the right of voting at the elections of Poor Law Guardians for not having paid the seed rate; and, if the Local Government Board will give such directions as will insure that no one is deprived of his vote for not having paid this rate?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Seed Supply Act requires that the seed rate shall be levied as a part of the poor rate, and collected with it. The disabilities as to voting which follow non-payment of the one, equally, therefore, attend non-payment of the other. This being provided by law, the Local Government Board have no power to give such a direction as is suggested.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — DEATH FROM OVERWORK—CHELTENHAM BOARD SCHOOL.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is true that the jury at a coroner's inquest just held at Cheltenham on the body of Elizabeth Rowley aged eight, who it was alleged had died from overwork at a Board School, found by their verdict, given in accordance with the medical evidence, that the primary cause of death was inflammation of the membranes of the brain; that the lessons coupled with the time devoted to study were too great a mental strain for a healthy child of seven or eight years to bear, and that the mental strain she underwent hastened her death; and, whether he will maintain the new Code in its present severity?

MR. MUNDELLA: I know nothing of this case, except that I saw a paragraph in *The Times* yesterday, on which this Question appears to be founded. I telegraphed at once to Her Majesty's Inspector to make an inquiry and report upon it. He is inspecting in a remote part of his district, and telegraphs that he will report on Monday. There must be some error in the paragraph, as there is no School Board, and consequently no Board school, in Cheltenham. So far from the New Code being more severe for children of eight years of age than former Codes, the direct intention and, I believe, the effect of it is to relieve children of tender years from pressure. It empowers teachers and managers to withdraw delicate children from examination; but we think this is insufficient, and we are considering how we can best protect such children from being overworked during the year previous to the examination.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT—CHARLES THOMAS—LEOMINSTER UNION.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the President of the Local Board, Whether his attention has been called to the re-appointment of Charles Thomas, as Inspector for a term of three years, by the Leominster Urban Sanitary Authorities; and, whether this is the same Charles Thomas who, in December last, was declared by a special jury, in the case of Priestman v. Thomas and others, to have been a party concerned in forging the will of Mr. James Whalley; and, if so, whether he will take steps to cancel this appointment?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, on the 25th instant, we received a report from the Rural Sanitary Authority of the Leominster Union that they had re-appointed Charles Thomas as Inspector of Nuisances for the district. He is the person who was one of the defendants in the case referred to, and who, according to the finding of the jury, was a party to the forging of a will. We have addressed a letter to the Sanitary Authority stating that, having regard to the finding of the jury, we must decline to sanction his appointment as an Inspector of Nuisances.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. J. LOWTHER wished to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster a Question of which he had given him private Notice—Whether it was the case that the markets and fairs of North Lincolnshire were closed, while those of New Holland, the neighbouring district, were open?

MR. DODSON: Sir, foot-and-mouth disease is happily now extinct in the parts about New Holland—which is a separate county for the purpose of the Act—and an Order, therefore, freeing this district will be issued to-night. Disease still exists in North Lincolnshire, though it is very largely reduced, and, therefore, these markets are still under restrictions. I hope, however, shortly to be able to remove the closing Order.

MR. J. LOWTHER inquired whether a cargo of diseased cattle did not land last November in North Lincolnshire?

MR. DODSON: There was a cargo which landed either on the 29th of October or on the 11th of November in which there were a few diseased sheep or swine, I do not remember which. But the animals were slaughtered at the port of debarkation, and there is no reason to suppose that the infection spread inland.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Government, Whether they have any information which they can properly communicate to the House with regard to the military proceedings in Egypt?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Up to this time we have received no telegram whatever from General Graham.

NAVY—THE ROYAL YACHTS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the details of the cost of Royal sea passages could be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, there would be no objection to present the Return if the hon. Member thought it necessary to move for it, but it would be similar to that previously laid before the House.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE—HORSE ARTILLERY.

Sir HENRY TYLER: Can the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War tell me, Whether it is a fact that General Graham, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Evelyn Baring all requested that a battery of Horse Artillery might be sent to Egypt, and whether that request was refused by Her Majesty's Government?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think it would be better for the hon. Gentleman to put down the Question for Monday. I may say that a suggestion to that effect was made from Egypt, but I do not think it came from General Graham.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST: Can the noble Lord say when he received the last telegram from General Graham?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: We have had no telegram direct from him since Saturday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

INHABITED HOUSE DUTY ACTS.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE, in rising to move the Resolution standing in his name, said, the subject was one of special interest at the present moment, when the question of overcrowding among the poor in our great towns was so prominently before the public. He had obtained at different times modifications of the restrictions connected with the House Tax, and he now proposed to show how to provide healthy homes for the mass of the people. Most of the suggestions put forth were in the direction of removing dilapidated and unhealthy buildings; but there were very few proposals for obtaining new ones. The Inhabited House Duty threw every obstacle in the way of attaining that object. If many dwellings were comprised in one large building the tax was levied on the whole, although every tenement might be of a less rental than £20. That was not fair, because a separate house of a similar rent would not be taxed. Sir Sydney Waterlow's Company had escaped the duty by building their model dwellings with open staircases and no front doors, the law being that a house with a front door and a common staircase was liable, even if occcupied by several families paying separate rents and rates. The buildings erected by the Peabody Trustees, the Middlesex Association, and other Bodies were not free of the tax unless they obtained a certificate from the Treasury. It might be said—"If you can get that certificate, what more do you want?" But the fact was that if a private individual built houses for the poor the tax must be paid, however admirably adapted to the labouring classes the dwellings might be. For instance, Messrs. Ashby Horner and Mr. Hart erected such buildings in Stratford and in the South of London, expecting them to be free from the duty; but on applying in November last to the Treasury they received the following reply:—

> "Treasury Chambers, 17th November, 1883.
>
> "Sir,—I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you in reply to your letter of this day's date that it is not in accordance with the usual practice to furnish applicants with copies of directions given by one Government Department to another. Their Lordships, however, wish me to add that in June, 1866, they directed that Inhabited House Duty should not be charged on

certain dwellings erected by the Metropolitan Association for improving the dwellings of the industrial classes, in cases where each distinct tenement was of a less annual value than £20. This exemption has not been extended to buildings erected by private individuals.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
"Your obedient servant, J. H. COLE.
"Mr. HENRY HART, 16, Great Dover St., S.E."

Instead of removing restrictions on the construction of houses for the working classes, the authorities had followed a contrary policy. There were three absolute necessaries of existence—food, clothing, and lodging; but while the taxes had been removed from food and clothing, additional taxation had been placed upon lodging. Whatever public improvements were wanted—whether bridges, or roads, or the removal of toll-bars — the expense had all been thrown on the dwellings of the people, and so, likewise, had the cost of education; local bodies having apparently no idea of any other source of income. Were these taxes placed on the owner of the building? No; they all fell on the occupier. He was called upon to pay for improvements which indirectly increased the letting value of his house, and then for having done so he was compelled to pay more rent. The result of the removal of the Window Tax had been that small houses were now provided with windows equal to what in former times were only to be found in houses of a superior class: but the House Tax prevented the addition of a room or an increase to the height of a small house, because the increase of the value to £20 would render it liable to the tax. The Inhabited House Duty, he contended, did a vast amount of mischief. There were many persons who held that a £20 limit of rateable value was a sufficient limit at which to fix the levying of this tax; but those persons could have but little idea of the class of dwellings which came within that limit in the Metropolis, as compared with the comfortable dwellings in country districts which were rated at the same amount. This showed the great inequality of the tax; in addition to which there were in the Metropolis restrictions as to occupancy, which made the impost still more harsh and galling—restrictions, he meant, such as that which compelled the occupier of a large block of warehouses and offices to pay Inhabited House Duty on the whole in the event of his allowing a junior clerk in his employ to sleep on the premises in the capacity of caretaker. In Scotland, where the people had long been familiar with the flat system, each occupation was treated as a separate house; but it was not so in England. This tax was chiefly paid by the Metropolis, where the amount which it yielded was £982,676, the whole amount paid by England and Wales being £1,814,870; and by Scotland, £118,660. The half of the whole House Tax was £966,000, and London paid £982,000; and it was in London that the buildings occupied by the working classes were of the most wretched character—hot-beds of crime, vice, disease, and misery. The whole tax, he contended, was a tax upon health, morality, and decency, and ought to be repealed, in order that private individuals might be encouraged to invest their capital in the erection of dwellings suitable for the occupation of all classes in the community, with a reasonable hope of being able to secure a fair and remunerative return upon their outlay. He was satisfied that the full advantages of the abolition of this tax could only be ascertained after it was put an end to. It must be remembered that this was the only tax remaining on the Statute Book which interfered with the mode or manner of construction of the article taxed. The loss occasioned by the repeal of this antiquated and injurious tax might easily be made good out of the very handsome surplus which was certain to be realized at the end of the financial year. He trusted that the matter would receive the best consideration of the Government. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

MR. J. HOWARD seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in order to afford facilities for adapting buildings and parts of buildings for the occupation of the labouring poor, and in order to offer inducements for the erection of houses and blocks of buildings specially suitable for artizans and labourers, it is absolutely essential that the restrictions as to size and mode of contruction at present entailed by the Inhabited House Duty Acts should be removed, and the tax repealed,"—(*Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he wished to call attention especially to that portion of the hon. Member's speech which was an allegation that a distinction was made by the Treasury and the Inland Revenue between blocks of buildings erected by Associations and buildings of precisely the same character and object erected by individuals. If this were the case, he ventured to say it never was intended that the Treasury or the Inland Revenue Department should have the power of imposing or remitting taxation; but it was intended that they should intelligently apply the law to the public at large. It was clearly for the benefit of the community not to tax the smaller houses; and he thought it was a mistake to compel all who wished to improve the condition of the working classes by the erection of dwellings to form costly Companies. There were many persons who desired to improve the dwellings of the working classes, and where the conditions were alike the treatment ought to be alike also.

Mr. COURTNEY congratulated his hon. Friend the Member for the City upon having on various occasions pointed out defects in the law. Some of the defects of which he had now complained had been remedied. With respect to buildings for the working classes, a distinction was at one time directed to be drawn between the case of buildings like those erected by the Peabody Trustees, in which no pecuniary benefit was derived by those who constructed them, and the case of other buildings. In the former case the buildings were exempted from the tax. But of late the only distinction drawn with respect to working-class buildings turned upon the form in which they were built, whoever might build them; and blocks were exempted from duty provided they fulfilled the condition that each particular part of the building should be a separate house of less than £20 a-year. The matter was brought before the Treasury in August last by a gentleman who had built a block of dwellings in the East End for the accommodation of the working classes. The officers of the Inland Revenue reported that, although all the conditions were not fulfilled, it was certainly true that the block was built for the accommodation of the labouring classes, and that it would be let out in tenements, each of which would be under £20 a-year; and they submitted to the Treasury the question whether it was necessary to insist on the condition that the staircase should be open to the outer air. The Treasury took this matter into consideration. They felt that the position was untenable, and that the intention of the law was fulfilled, whether the houses stood side by side or were placed one over the other, or whether they were to have a staircase open to the street or closed, provided only that the conditions were satisfied that the block consisted of tenements each of which was under £20 value. The Treasury had issued an Order on the point, and so far, therefore, his hon. Friend's object had been attained, subject to this condition—that if some parts of such building were let at more than £20 a-year, and other parts were let at less than £20, the tax would be confined to the former premises, and the latter would be exempt. His hon. Friend's objection that the House Duty tended to prevent the construction of dwellings for the poor would for the future, therefore, be entirely removed. Having thus dealt with the incidence of the tax as it affected the poorer classes, he hoped that his hon. Friend would feel that his object had been entirely attained. The unequal assessment of the houses of the rich was a subject which the Treasury had under their consideration; but the principle was regulated by the Act of Parliament, and the assessment was conducted by District Commissioners, who were out of the control of the Central Department. He admitted the entire force of the objection as to the unfair exemption in the levying of this tax on the houses of the rich, and it was a matter which he hoped to see rectified.

Mr. GRANTHAM remarked, that one of his own constituents had quite recently been threatened with a prosecution unless he paid the tax, although the houses concerned had been built by him for the express purpose of providing wholesome accommodation for the working classes. Yet it seemed that the same class of houses were exempt, under the Order of 1866, when they were built by Companies.

Mr. COURTNEY replied, that the exception in the case of individuals was removed just before the end of the Recess, so that Companies and individuals were now on the same footing.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, he was extremely glad his hon. Friend and Colleague had brought this subject before the House, because it was one of many instances which exhibited the imperfection and chaotic condition of our fiscal legislation. When he first entered the House of Parliament there were no less than three taxes on houses—the Inhabited House Duty, the Income Tax, and the Fire Insurance Duty. Against the latter he immediately set on foot an opposition, and after moving again and again for its abolition was at last successful. Some day or other there would be, perhaps, only one House Tax. There were some good features in the Inhabited House Duty, apart from its being a secondary tax upon the same material; and it had this primary recommendation—that people generally spent something like a fixed proportion of their income upon house rent. That, after all, was but an imperfect test; and he believed that in a revised, and improved, and well-adjusted Income Tax would be found a substitute for the present most imperfect and unequal charges on the revenue of individuals. Since the tax was first imposed successive exemptions had been made in favour of warehouses, premises wholly used for purposes of business, and premises inhabited only by a caretaker and his wife and family; but if the Inland Revenue Department found in one of the palatial buildings in the City of London, which were let off in flats for offices, that a person slept on the premises who could not be considered as a caretaker in the distinct terms of the enactment, they held that the exemption was absolutely cancelled. He considered that this was a great grievance. It was a monstrous misapprehension of their duty by the officials of Somerset House, and it was a subject to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer should direct his attention. The duty of these officials was frankly and fairly to carry out the provisions of the Legislature with regard to the exemption of all buildings occupied industrially for the purposes of trade. If that rule were followed, it would save the officials and the taxpayers of the City of London a vast deal of trouble and complication. He asked that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be good enough to use his influence, in order that this question might be fairly considered and fairly treated. With regard to the future of this tax, he was not so sanguine as his hon. Friend in looking for its immediate repeal. It would not, of course, live for ever; but it could only be dealt with in connection with the other great taxes which were in affinity with it, especially the Income Tax. A good Valuation Bill was also much needed. Complaints had frequently been made of the inadequate valuation put upon buildings in the country, and he considered these complaints were perfectly justifiable. He saw the other day a paper which professed to be a statement of the valuation put upon buildings in different parts of the country. In looking over that statement he observed that in a place with which he was familiar, buildings that were quite palaces, and which were worth thousands of pounds, appeared as having been valued at £500 a-year. He regretted that the country had been allowed to run back during the last 12 years on the important questions of assessing and raising Imperial and local taxation. It was a scandal that while we were spending thousands and millions on wars here, there, and everywhere, we had not yet settled how to raise our Revenue, or the system of assessment which ought to be carried out. He urged the Government, in conclusion, to consider this matter, with a view to introduce a complete system of valuation throughout the country.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, the House was indebted to the hon. Member who introduced this subject for his continued efforts in directing attention to the injustice of the Inhabited House Duty. He was glad to have heard the statement of the Financial Secretary (Mr. Courtney). It showed that one very important point had been gained—that, namely, of removing a restriction on the erection of houses for the working classes. He was sure this was a worthy object of attention, and all who took an interest in the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes in London should endeavour to come to some arrangement by which the benefits of diminished taxation might be conferred upon houses of that kind as well as upon others. What the working classes required was that the advantage of the modification that had been mentioned by the Financial Secretary should be extended not only to new buildings erected for the accommodation of the working classes, but to old buildings which, though now occupied by them, had originally been built for the accommodation of single families. The old houses were constructed in a different manner from the new tenements that were being erected. The new tenements were provided with separate outside stairs, and this provision could not be made in the old houses. Working men, however, must live in them, and they were, in consequence of the construction of these houses, prevented, not only now, but in all time coming, from having the benefit of the exemption from the tax. He hoped some endeavour would be made to come to an arrangement by which the benefit of diminished taxation could be secured by these persons. He understood, from the statement that had been made on the part of the Government, that they were fully alive to the question. This was an old story; but it was in the nature of all these things that they had to be reiterated year after year before the Government would take them up. The hon. Gentleman, in introducing the Resolution, referred to the inequalities of the tax. He had no intention to go into the details of the subject, because the Financial Secretary had shown that he was ready to make improvements; but he believed the attention of the country could not be too frequently called to the gross injustice inflicted on all the lower and middle classes by the almost total exemption from this tax of the great houses in the country. The tax was instituted in 1851 in lieu of the old Window Tax, which, however objectionable in other respects, was an equitable tax, as it increased in accordance with the size of the house, and not according to value; but the result now was that the large houses paid much less in proportion than the houses of the poor. For example, upon a large country mansion, say with 180 windows, under the Window Tax the duty would have been £93 2*s.*; but now they found that on all the valuation rolls there was hardly an instance of a country house being valued at more than £500, and the duty upon a valuation of £500 was only £19, so that these large houses had benefited to the extent of three-fourths, and in some cases even four-fifths, by the reduction of the tax, while the houses of the working classes had derived no benefit whatever. As they came down the scale, the sums paid by large houses became less; whereas the tax pressed more heavily on the poor. He thought the House should bring the subject under the notice of the Government year by year until the Government took some steps to remedy the existing inequalities. The House Tax, if it were equitably adjusted, would not be a bad tax, it being a rough but tolerably fair mode of determining a man's situation and means to ascertain the kind of house in which he lived.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he had been appealed to by several Members, and he wished now to answer that appeal. It had been asked whether the exemption from the payment of this tax which had been granted in 1866 to houses built by Corporations for housing the working classes applied now to houses built for the same purpose by private persons; and whether that exemption, so extended under the Order issued during the Recess, applied not only to future houses, but to houses that might have been built in the past? His hon. Friend (Mr. Dick-Peddie) had specially referred to some houses constructed at a former date. He thought he could give a satisfactory answer to his question. The Order was retrospective as well as prospective. If the tenements were really separate, and under the value of £20, the exemption would apply. If they were not separate tenements, then, of course, it would be impossible for the Order to apply. The reason why, in 1866, the exemption was only granted to houses built by a Corporation or institution for the erection of improved dwellings for the working classes was because at that time no houses of this character had been built by other than Corporations. Since that time, however, a custom had arisen in certain cases of private persons building houses of this character, those persons not being Corporations or public Companies. The question of the duty on mansions had been introduced into the debate, and it had been supposed that they were differently treated in the Metropolis and in the country; but that was not so. All houses were assessed according to their letting value by the year, whether in London or elsewhere. That was the law as to the Inhabited House Duty and as to local rates, and he doubted whether anybody would find it a very easy task to alter it. Something had been said as to the hardship of persons paying duty who lived in a part of a counting-house on the scale of a partner or manager. But it certainly did not seem reasonable to exonerate them on that account from the payment of Inhabited House Duty. He would, however, look into the matter. As to the proposal generally, he should ask his hon. Friend to allow the Resolution to be negatived. Whatever he might feel with reference to some details of the tax, it would be absurd on that account to throw away £1,800,000 a-year. Some day, probably, whether in connection with Imperial taxation or in some other way, the duty might be amended in some details. But beyond that he could not go. Objection might be taken to almost every tax, and he could not agree to that Resolution.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer revised the tax in regard to counting-houses, warehouses, and banks, and other buildings of great value, he would find it necessary to put on imposts which had been taken off; for at present the assessment of such buildings was not in a satisfactory condition. Houses in the Metropolis were fairly assessed one with the other; but in the country great discrepancies occurred with regard to the Inhabited House Duty, and the City establishments seemed to him to get rid of a fair share of their legitimate burden.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked leave to withdraw the Amendment, and thanked the Government for what had been conceded with respect to the House Tax, although the top and bottom of the scale were left in the same state as before—namely, the very poor, living in old houses, were not affected by the concession.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS) — FEVER HOSPITAL AT WINCHMORE HILL.—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, in rising, according to Notice, to call attention to the conduct of the Local Government Board in placing a permanent fever hospital at Winchmore Hill without giving an opportunity to the local authorities, who had written to the Local Government Board on the subject, of stating their objections to the hospital; and to move—

> "That the action of the Local Government Board in declining to hear the objections of the inhabitants of Winchmore Hill, expressed hrough their local sanitary authority, against the establishment of a fever and a small-pox hospital in their district, is a course calculated to bring the principles of self-government into disrepute, and to establish a dangerous precedent for the exercise of that controlling power over local boards entrusted by Parliament to that Department,"

urged that the action of the Local Government Board in declining to hear the objections of the inhabitants of Winchmore Hill, expressed through their local sanitary authority, the Local Board of Southgate, against the establishment of a fever and small-pox hospital in their district, was a course calculated to bring the principles of local self-government into disrepute, and to establish a dangerous precedent for the exercise of that controlling power over Local Boards intrusted by Parliament to that Department. A proposal having some time ago been made to place a permanent fever hospital in the midst of that district, the inhabitants naturally objected to such a proceeding, and the local sanitary authority addressed a request to the Local Government Board that their objections to it might be heard. On the 10th of January the local sanitary authority wrote to the Local Government Board, stating that the inhabitants were strongly averse to the proposal; that they, themselves, concurred in their objections to it; and that they hoped the Local Government Board would consider them. On the 16th of January the Local Government Board wrote, in reply, stating that the proposal referred to had not yet come under the consideration of the Department. Such a reply naturally conveyed to those who received it the impression that when the proposal came before the Board it would be ready to hear their objections. The Local Government Board was asked to receive a deputation on the subject as soon as it came officially before them. Then they had received the astonishing communication that the Board had already assented to the scheme, which a few days before they had been told was not under its consideration. The result of this had been that the opinion of the locality had not been heard, and the inhabitants would naturally attribute any ill-effects which might follow the placing of a fever and small-pox hospital in the midst of a thickly-populated district to the action of the Local Government Board. He thought that this would have a bad effect upon local authorities generally. The object of establishing Local Boards in connection with the Local Government Board was that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood should be able to address the Local Government Board through the Local Board. But in this case the Local Government Board practically refused to hear them, although they had applied to be heard; and when attention was called to the matter, the reply of the Local Government Board was that they had considered the matter, and had thought that there was so little to be said on the other side that it had not been worth while to receive a deputation. Surely the inhabitants of a district in which it was proposed to place a hospital of this nature had a right to be heard. In Middlesex they had had an unfortunate experience of fever and small-pox hospitals, as instanced in the long controversy concerning that at Hampstead. Everyone must admit that hospitals of this kind were a necessity, and must exist in some locality, and in this instance the inhabitants were quite ready to make sacrifices, provided that the necessity was clearly proved to them; but their request to have an interview with the Local Government Board on the subject had been refused with an extraordinary celerity. Their wishes could not now be heard, but he was anxious to obtain some declaration from the Local Government Board that this was not the principle on which they were going to act in future; and he had called attention to the matter in the hope that he would obtain some disclaimer, or some explanation, of the extraordinary course they had taken with regard to the local authorities in this case.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL acknowledged the courtesy with which the noble Lord had approached the subject, and the almost complete accuracy of his facts. There was one point on which he thought the noble Lord was misinformed. On the 11th of January a communication had been addressed to the Board by the Southgate Local Board, stating that they had received a memorial from the inhabitants of the district, expressing an opinion that the erection of a hospital for fever and small-pox patients on the site in question would be prejudicial to the health of those residing in the neighbourhood, and would be prejudicial to the district, and that the Local Board concurred in these views. The Local Board, however, did not express any wish to be heard; they expressed their views upon paper; but did not ask that any deputation from them should be received. On the 16th of January the Local Government Board replied that the proposal was not yet under their consideration. The Metropolitan Asylums Board had not, in fact, at that time determined to acquire the site. On the 19th a resolution had been passed by the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board that the site should be secured. The Board then received Reports from two of their Inspectors, from which it appeared that the site was about as free from the objections generally urged against all sites, more or less, as any site could be, and that it was peculiarly suitable for a hospital for the reception of such cases as it was designed to receive. On the 23rd of January the Local Government Board arrived at the decision that the site should be approved; and it was not until the day following that on which the consent was given that the Local Board of Southgate applied for an interview. Therefore, the Local Government Board should be absolved from any charge of discourtesy, and, of course, such a thing was never intended. He thought it was wholly impossible to choose a site for a fever hospital without stirring up some amount of local prejudice and dissatisfaction; but in this case every precaution had been taken, all objections had been set forth on paper, and these had been carefully examined, and the Inspectors had reported favourably on the subject. It should also be remembered that it was another body—the Metropolitan Asylums Board—that had decided upon the site; all that the Local Government Board had had to do had been to weigh the propositions of one representative body against those of another similar representative body. In his judgment, the principles on which local government were conducted, and on which the authority of the Local Government Board was founded, were less likely to be brought into disrepute by a careful and quiet review of the circumstances of each case, and by a calm decision, than by any action on their part which opened the door to a prolonged and acrimonious discussion and final dissatisfaction with the decision arrived at. The Board were not asked to receive a deputation from the Local Board until after their sanction to the purchase of the site had been given, and he had no hesitation in saying that any local dissatisfaction which might exist could not be weighed against the substantial advantages to the health of the Metropolis which were secured by the sanction of the Local Government Board to the erection of the fever hospital in question.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought that his noble Friend had been entirely justified in bringing forward this question. In a case of this nature it was the duty of the Local Government Board to take care that no ground for dissatisfaction should exist; but here the Local Board had received rather a snubbing. Everybody must feel that the hon. Member had stated the arrangements of the Local Government Board very fairly; but it was impossible to refrain from saying that the comparison he had given the House of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the Local Board at Southgate was not altogether a just one. The Metropolitan Asylums Board was not representative of the place in the same sense at all as the Local Board. He thought, however, his noble Friend would be satisfied with the discussion which had taken place.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE merely wished to say that he agreed in thinking that it would have been advisable to have had a paragraph in the letter stating that the representations of the Local Board had received full consideration.

EARL PERCY concurred in thinking that a communication from a Government Office, stating that a certain matter had not come under their notice, would have the effect of silencing any person applying for information, and would lead him to suppose that no action would be taken. If, however, he was informed that the matter, though it had not then come before the Department, would shortly be considered, it would then be in his power to take such further steps by deputation to the Department, or otherwise, as he might be advised.

[The subject then dropped.]

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—ZEBEHR PASHA.—OBSERVATIONS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Prime Minister, Whether he had received any notice of the intention of the authorities in Egypt to appoint Zebehr Pasha Governor of Khartoum? He was distinctly informed that it was the intention of the authorities—whether Egyptian or English he knew not, or both—to so appoint this man, who was well known to be the greatest slave dealer in the Soudan. He was, in fact, the arch-type of slave dealers. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) believed it was originally intended—he did not know whether by General Gordon on his own motion, or by some of that underground communication which had gone on between the English and Egyptian authorities—to send Zebehr Pasha with General Gordon to Khartoum. Reasons occurred which prevented that; but now he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was assured, on authority as good as a private individual could have, that Zebehr Pasha was to be appointed to the Governorship of Khartoum. He asked that the Prime Minister would give some satisfactory answer on the subject. If this terrible scourge were to be sent back to the Soudan, from which he was driven away by General Gordon himself some years ago, the House would consider that the remedy to be applied to the Soudan would be as bad as the disease it was intended to remove.

MR. GLADSTONE: In the very few words in which I shall answer the Question of the hon. Member, I beg my reply may not be understood as assenting to the collateral proposition which he dropped in the course of his remarks. What he asks is, whether the Egyptian authorities intend to appoint Zebehr Pasha Governor of Khartoum? My reply is that no arrangement has been made with respect to the Governorship of Khartoum, from which, at present, General Gordon—the person in authority—is conducting the great operations with which he is charged. Until the arrangements have been made, it is inclusively implied in that statement that no intention has been formed by the authorities that Zebehr Pasha or anyone else should be Governor of Khartoum.

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—WEDNESDAY SITTINGS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. WARTON wished to call attention to the subject of Wednesday's Sittings, which were often occupied in the discussion of Bills about which nobody cared twopence. The House was often not made until half-past 12, and he had taken part in keeping Members out of the House to prevent a House being made, as hon. Members seemed to care much more for their own Private Bills than for the finances of the country on questions of taxation. A limit should be fixed; and if hon. Members were not present in sufficient numbers—say by half-past 12 or 1 o'clock on Wednesdays—the House should stand adjourned.

ARMY—WOOLWICH ARSENAL — SURPLUS STOCK.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Government, Whether they were prepared to furnish to the House, either by means of a Return or by consenting to the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry, with information with regard to the state of things which at present existed in the Dockyards, and especially at Woolwich, where, he alleged, millions upon millions of money were wasted? There was an accumulation of war material there of which no stock had been taken for 25 years. The military authorities, he believed, had not the least idea of the prime cost of the material which, in varying quantities, was, from time to time, sold by auction from the Dockyard. He asked, also, for an account of the stock-taking which was now going on, and whether some War Office official would be appointed to check it?

MR. COURTNEY said, that his hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand) did not think this inquiry would have been addressed to him, and was, therefore, not in his place.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I did not expect it myself.

MR. COURTNEY promised to communicate what the hon. Member had said to the Surveyor General of Ordnance.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £1,454, Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.

(2.) £7,862, Public Buildings, Great Britain.

(3.) £11,901, Public Offices Site.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked what was the present state of the arrangements with regard to the new Admiralty and War Office; and whether it was intended to present any Estimate for the building this year?

MR. COURTNEY said, his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was not in his place; but he (Mr. Courtney) thought he would be able to give a satisfactory answer to the question of the right hon. Gentleman. Sketch plans had been invited to be sent in, and a small Committee had been appointed to select 10 competitors from those who sent in such plans. The 10 competitors would be invited to send in more detailed plans from which a selection would be made. There would be a small allowance in the Estimates this year, not, however, for the actual expenses relating to the building, but to meet the expenses of the Committee.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) £290, Metropolitan Police Court Buildings.

(5.) £5,005, New Courts of Justice and Offices.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, it seemed to him that the description of the Vote did not altogether correspond with the account given in the foot note. The sum of £5,005 appeared to be required to—

> "Reimburse the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn for the sums expended by them since 1840, out of their own funds, in the erection and

fitting up of Courts for the use of the Judges of the Court of Chancery, and otherwise for the benefit of the said Courts,"

and not to meet expenses incurred during the erection of the New Courts of Justice.

MR. COURTNEY said, that the Courts of Justice Act provided that this sum should be repaid to the Society of Lincoln's Inn, and, in that sense, the sum became part of the expenditure involved in the erection of the New Courts of Justice. The right hon. Gentleman would be aware that two Vice Chancellors were appointed a considerable number of years ago, and the Society of Lincoln's Inn undertook to find the Courts in which the Vice Chancellors should sit. The Courts, however, were of a temporary character, and it was understood that by the scheme for erecting new Courts of Justice the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn should be repaid the actual expense to which they had been put in fitting up the two Courts in question.

MR. WARTON said, that, as a member of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, he was astonished at the smallness of the sum to be paid to the Society considering the amount of good it had done. For 40 years it had consented to the appropriation of part of its dining hall for the purpose of the Courts in which the Vice Chancellors could sit. He agreed with the right hon Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth) that the Vote under consideration was not very clearly explained. He earnestly hoped that they had not yet got to the end of the expenditure upon the Royal Courts of Justice. It was his misfortune last month to sit in one of the Courts, and the discomfort which he suffered was such as he had never experienced in any Court of Justice previously. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to visit No. 5 Court some day and sit for an hour behind the Queen's Counsel. The right hon. Gentleman would find a door on each side of him from which came a most cutting draught. The counsel felt the full force of the draught—indeed, their position was a most unhappy one. The whole furniture of the Courts was of the shabbiest and poorest workhouse style. The woodwork was of a very poor and indifferent description—indeed, it had not that quiet and respectable appearance it was fitting it should have. The accommodation for counsel was positively disgraceful. There was not sufficient space in which to open a brief—indeed, the arrangements throughout were exceedingly bad. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would cause the woodwork to be toned down in colour or grained. The country had been put to tremendous expense in the erection of the new Courts. The public, therefore, had a right to expect that their convenience would be consulted in the interior arrangements of the Courts.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, prevalence of draughts in the new Law Courts had, no doubt, been a source of great trouble to the officials. They had made great efforts of late to cure the draughts, and in the case of most of the Courts their endeavours had been successful. With the experience they had gained the authorities hoped they would be able to mitigate, if not to totally remove, the evil in all the Courts. He did not think the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton) was quite correct in saying that the furniture of the Courts was of a very poor and shabby character. The desks and whole fittings of the Courts were arranged by the late Mr. Street, and he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) believed that it was at Mr. Street's instance that the woodwork was not grained as the hon. and learned Member had suggested. From an artistic point of view the fittings and woodwork were considered satisfactory.

MR. WARTON asked that the desks should be covered with red baize if they were not to be grained.

Vote *agreed to.*

(6.) £2,003, Shannon Navigation.

(7.) £1,000, Lighthouses Abroad.

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(8.) £1,766, Treasury.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked for an explanation of the item of £314 for—

> "Special work, out of office hours, in connection with the destruction of valueless records; allowance to an assistant private secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; extra pay to messengers for attendance during the Parliamentary Session."

It appeared to him to be a very objectionable habit to lump all these items together. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have an assistant private secretary, but the salary paid him should be distinctly set forth. It might be that his salary was £300, and that all the other expenses amounted to only £14. When additional offices were created there should be some understanding as to how they were created and what the salaries attaching to them were. There had been a great many additional private secretaries appointed lately, and he intended shortly to raise a point concerning them. Gentlemen who had not passed the Civil Service examination had been promoted over the heads of other gentlemen who had passed. At present he would content himself by asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary to the Treasury to inform them as to the separate items in the sum of £314. If assistant private secretaries were to be appointed and their salaries not clearly set forth great abuses might result. He would like to know how the sum of £314 was sub-divided?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he could only answer as to part of the item. The Chancellor of the Exchequer always had an assistant private secretary, and the one he (Mr. Childers) had received a salary of £100 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, had an assistant private secretary, to whom was paid £150 a-year; his (Mr. Childers's) assistant private secretary only received £100 a-year.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had always had an assistant private secretary, why the salary given was brought up in the Supplementary Estimates?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that was more than he could tell.

EARL PERCY asked what was the reason of the increase in the fees to Parliamentary counsel? Had the drawing of Bills been so arduous a task that, in respect of it, it was necessary to ask for a supplementary allowance?

MR. COURTNEY said, it was only the supplementary fees that were included in the present Estimates.

Vote *agreed to.*

(9.) £500, Home Office.

(10.) £100, Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

(11.) £2,350, Charity Commission.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he must make one observation, however trivial it might seem. It was illustrated by the Vote they had just passed. Last year he drew attention to what appeared to him objectionable on the part of the Government in framing the Estimates on the principle of the net sum required, and not the gross amount. Under the head of Charity Commission he noticed there was a new Department —City of London Parochial Charities Department—for which a sum of £600 or £700 was demanded. In the foot note it was stated that—

> "The expenses of this Department are to be repaid to the Exchequer under Section 44 of the Act 46 & 47 *Vict.*, c. 36, out of the Funds of the Charities dealt with."

Why, in that case, was the outgoing sum placed on the Estimates at all? If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would turn back to the last Vote he would see that £100 was only asked for out of a total cost of upwards of £9,000.

MR. COURTNEY said, that in the case of the last Vote the receipts and expenditure fell during the same period. The repayment of the expenses of the City of London Parochial Charities Department could only be made at a certain time.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked when the duties of the Commission would terminate?

MR. COURTNEY said, he believed the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) was passed for three years.

Vote *agreed to.*

(12.) £7,950, Local Government Board.

MR. WARTON said, it would be in the recollection of the Committee that last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair) made a very brilliant speech in favour of vaccination, and completely carried the House with him. The question of vaccination was exciting a good deal of attention just now; indeed, it was expected that the antivaccinators would turn the scale between the Liberals and Conservatives in the contest which was now proceeding at Brighton. Upon the occasion of this Vote he wished to call attention to the supply of calf lymph. The notion was held by some people that disease was often promoted by vaccination. If, therefore, it was known that calf lymph would be supplied, he had little fear of the anti-vaccination agitation making much headway.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE pointed out that there was nothing in the present Vote which bore in the least upon the vaccination establishments. It would be well for the hon. and learned Gentleman to call attention to the question when the ordinary Vote was brought up; but, in the meantime, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would be very happy to confer with the hon. and learned Member.

Vote *agreed to.*

(13.) £5,000, The Mint, including Coinage.

(14.) £1,453, Patent Office, &c.

(15.) £30,629, Stationery and Printing.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that this Vote was an old offender with regard to the Supplementary Estimates. Almost every year since he had been in Parliament the Stationery officials had made inaccurate estimates of what sums would be required within their Department to meet the charges for the Public Service. He had often thought it would be extremely useful if the Secretary to the Treasury would refuse to present Supplementary Estimates in certain cases—in cases, for instance, where only small sums were involved. This, no doubt, was a case in which a very considerable sum of money was required to complete the Services of the year; but if the Secretary to the Treasury would only have the courage to decline to submit Supplementary Estimates in order to save Public Departments from the ordeal of the Comptroller and Auditor General's examination, he would be much more likely than he was, under present circumstances, to bring his expenditure within the Estimate. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was surprised that the Stationery officials did not profit by the repeated warnings they had received in regard to the excess of their expenditure over their Estimates. If the Secretary to the Treasury refused to present these Supplementary Estimates from the Stationery Office, the Office would be reported upon by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the conditions of the Office would be fully inquired into, and the reasons of the excess would in due course be reported to the House. £30,000 was rather a heavy sum for the Committee to be asked to vote in the Supplementary Estimates. The Auditor General ought certainly to have an opportunity of examining carefully the details of the amount.

MR. COURTNEY said, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth) would involve a very grave step, which he feared the right hon. Gentleman himself would hardly take were it in his power to do so. The Stationery Office was not quite so bad as the right hon. Gentleman appeared to think it was. It was quite true that Supplementary Estimates were always presented from the Stationery Office; but it did not follow that the Office was extravagant. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the trouble to go into details, he would find that the excess was due to causes entirely beyond the control of the Office—due, in fact, to the legislation of that House. Legislation involved great expenditure on the part of the Stationery Office. For example, the two large items in this Supplementary Estimate were—Printing for Public Departments, £13,000; paper, £10,500. About two-thirds of the Supplementary Vote asked for printing and paper was on account of the General Post Office, owing mainly to the introduction of the Parcel Post, and the Patent Office, owing to the new departure taken under the Patents Act of last year. It could hardly be expected that the House of Commons would assume beforehand what the proposals of the Executive would be. They were driven to the necessity of putting before the House Supplementary Estimates in the spring to carry out the legislation which the House had sanctioned, if they wished to limit the Estimates put before the House, so as to ensure the economy they all desired. This was the explanation he had to offer to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth), and he submitted that the lesser of the evils confronting them was the following up of the legendary practice of presenting Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, no doubt there was a good deal of truth in what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney); but he seemed to forget that it was invariably the practice to submit Supplementary Estimates at the end of a Parliamentary Session. There was an Estimate of £250,000 or more habitually presented to Parliament in July, in consequence of the legislation of the year. In his opinion, Supplementary Estimates presented in February were nothing more or less than covers for extravagant expenditure.

Vote *agreed to.*

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for Her Majesty's Foreign and other Secret Services."

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked if it was usual to have a Supplementary Estimate presented in respect of the Secret Service? Of course, they could not inquire how the money was spent, but they were to suppose that the Government spent it properly. At the same time, it would be far wiser if the Government were to ask for the sum at once, and not trust to anything in the shape of a Supplementary Vote. The voting of Secret Service money was a very delicate matter; but his own experience convinced him it was an absolute necessity, and he did not mean in any kind of way to weaken the hands of the Government in respect to it. But £23,000 was voted last year, and now an additional sum of £10,000 was asked. The Committee ought to be informed why the whole £33,000 was not asked for last year. His idea was that formerly the sum voted was £33,000. ["No!"] Then he was under the impression there was another item for Secret Service. He thought the practice now adopted was a most inconvenient one, and it would be far better to take the entire sum that was likely to be required in one Vote rather than ask for an additional Vote.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that he was specially responsible for this Vote, as any excess on the Estimate was the subject of conference and settlement between him and such of his Colleagues as spent Secret Service money. When the Estimates were prepared last year, it was not believed that so large a sum as £33,000 would be required, and the additional sum now asked for had since become necessary.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought the Vote on which the Committee were now engaged was not one which they ought to pass without some discussion. It was a very objectionable practice to vote money for Secret Services, and the Irish Members had felt themselves called upon to raise a discussion whenever the Vote was presented for the sanction of the House. Certainly there had been some episodes recently which led to the conviction that the money voted for this purpose was often used in questionable methods and for dubious ends. The hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had called attention to the extraordinary addition now asked for to the Vote. It seemed that when the Estimates were framed the Government were of opinion that the sum of £23,000 was quite sufficient for Secret Service money, and it was only by extreme courtesy that the observations which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be termed an answer to the Question put to him. The Government, or some Member of it, was now asked to say, as far as they considered it consistent with the interests of the Public Service, what had occurred in the interval to render this very large additional expenditure necessary? The Irish Members took exception to the Vote in the present circumstances of their country, and he certainly did not think it ought to be passed in the absence of the Irish Representatives, and in a House of less than 20 Members. He would, therefore, suggest that the further consideration of the Vote should be postponed.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he had recently seen in the London papers an account of the trial of some Germans upon a charge of conspiring to blow up the German Embassy, and since then there had been a prosecution for perjury in connection with that trial. It seemed to him that a more absurd prosecution could not be imagined. It appeared that the persons to whom he referred were in daily communication with the police, and the whole object of these men was not to commit any outrage, serious or trifling, but to obtain rewards from the Government out of some part of its Secret Service money, or some money from a similar fund. In the way in which these matters were managed, it certainly appeared to him that it was an absolute waste of money to vote grants of this sort, because it did not appear that either reason or common sense was exercised in the expenditure of it. The case of these Germans afforded a fair illustration of the way in which the money was spent, and he certainly thought that the money ought not to be voted at all. Probably there would be no objection if the money were spent in a reasonable manner, and surely hon. Members were entitled to some explanation as to whether it was not a fact that the fund was merely used for the purpose of inducing persons to perjure themselves and to reap rewards without giving anything in return.

MR. GLADSTONE wished to say a word in answer to the observations of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). He was not able to agree with the hon. Member in the principle he had laid down. The hon. Member thought that Secret Service money was eminently a subject unfitted for Supplementary Estimates. He was not disposed to agree with the hon. Member, although the doctrine he had laid down would be of great convenience to the Government if it were followed. The view of the hon. Member was that, in the case of Secret Service money, it was necessary to frame the Estimates on a very high scale, so as to leave a considerable margin for unforeseen contingencies arising in the course of the year. The cause of these Supplementary Estimates was that the Government had proceeded upon the opposite principle, and had decided not to ask for money in excess of the amount which, at the time the Estimates were framed, they might believe to be the probable demands of the Public Service under this head. It was in consequence of following that principle that a Supplementary Estimate had been rendered necessary. It was a fair matter for the House to consider whether the principle of strict estimate or the principle of liberal estimate would be the more advantageous in regard to this subject; but, certainly, the liberal estimate was the one which, in most cases, would be for the convenience of the Government, and which the Government might be willing to adopt. In regard to the excess in the Vote itself, it was impossible, he was afraid, to give any account of the matter which would throw any light upon the details. As he understood the case referred to by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), it did not lie in the region of Secret Service, but belonged to a different class altogether. It was a case where an open reward was promised by the Government, or by other parties, and therefore it was entirely outside the question of the present Vote. The Vote for Secret Service was a Vote of Confidence, and if there was an excess hon. Members might, perhaps, be allowed to ask themselves whether there had not been circumstances in the history of the past year or two which would naturally account for it. There might be presumptive evidence to account for the excess, but these questions were of such a nature that it was impossible to enter into them. The Government must be left the masters of their own actions, and the distribution of the money was a matter of conscience. He would repeat that the Vote was altogether a Vote of Confidence, and that the only ground upon which the Government asked for it was the ground of confidence. He must, therefore, decline to give explanations which would wholly destroy the character of the Vote.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that hon. Members who represented Irish constituencies had a special right to ask for an explanation of this Vote. From their experience they did not find that the Secret Service money was applied to the purposes for which it was really intended. They did not believe that the appropriation of the money contributed to the maintenance of law or the repression of crime. On the contrary, they found that the men who had been engaged in distributing the money were the very persons who were interested in covering and cloaking crime as far as it was possible to do so. He could give a case in point. An accusation had recently been made by an Irish newspaper against one of the County Inspectors of Constabulary in Ireland. It was one of the functions of this County Inspector to detect crime; but he had been dismissed from the Service of the Government on account of certain defalcations in regard to the payment of Secret Service money intrusted to him. Now, it was extremely difficult to prove whether this gentleman was dismissed from the Service or not; but, at all events, he was for a time under a cloud at Dublin Castle, and was not in actual attendance upon his duty. Whether dismissed, or only suspended, he was relieved from the performance of his duties; but as soon as this Irish newspaper called attention to the facts of the case he was restored to the position he had previously occupied, and he was placed in a position which enabled him to bring an action for libel, notwithstanding that the accusation made against him was one of mal-administering the public money.

The CHAIRMAN said, that if the hon. Member was not prepared to connect his observations with the present Vote he should take them to be irrelevant.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, he intended to show that this person had been intrusted with the distribution of a portion of the fund which this particular Vote was intended to meet. He was speaking of a County Inspector charged with the detection of crime, who had been intrusted with the employment of persons under this Secret Service Fund; and he wanted to show that not only had this man misapplied the funds he had been intrusted with, but now, at the present time, when a plain accusation was made against him for crimes which he (Mr. Harrington) could not attempt to name in that House, he had been restored to the Service, for the purpose of enabling him to bring an action against a newspaper; and this Secret Service money was being used to shield him from the consequences of his outrageous conduct. He wanted to show that this man had been compelled to bring an action against an Irish newspaper, and various dilatory motions in Court had been made in order to enable him to draw his salary as long as he could, and to avoid coming to the scratch. In the meantime, every advantage was being taken of the postponement to intimidate the witnesses, who were prepared to give evidence against him, when the case came on for trial. Under these circumstances, he contended that there was nothing that could have a more immediate bearing upon the Vote now under discussion in the House than this case. It was the case of a County Inspector who had been taken away from the discharge of his ordinary official duties for the performance of other duties, against whom an accusation had been made that he had not accounted for the funds which had been placed his hands. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he was the person most accountable for the Vote, and for the manner in which it was disbursed; but he (Mr. Harrington) presumed that it was administrated by other persons who were not accountable to the right hon. Gentleman for what they did. The right hon. Gentleman might be accountable for it as regarded this country; but that portion of the sum which was expended in Ireland passed altogether out of the hands of the Exchequer, and the right hon. Gentleman had no means whatever of dictating how it was to be applied. He was sorry that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place, because the facts which he (Mr. Harrington) had drawn attention to were so notorious that they could not have escaped the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that the charge had been brought over and over again in Ireland—namely, that this County Inspector of police, who had been engaged in the administration of this Secret Service Fund, had been guilty of defalcations, and also of various abominable crimes; and the complaint he (Mr. Harrington) now made was that the Secret Service money was being given to persons in Ireland who were employed in shielding this man from the consequences of his crime. He challenged the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, who knew the manner in which this fund was worked by the Dublin Castle authorities, to explain what the facts of this case were. He (Mr. Harrington) believed that formal complaints were made of the witnesses engaged in bringing home these crimes to the County Inspector in question having been intimidated by detectives, and followed from one place to another in Ireland. He (Mr. Harrington) was well acquainted with the facts of the case, and there could not be the smallest shadow of a doubt that when this Inspector, who had been engaged in the administration of the Secret Service

Fund, was compelled to meet his accusers in Court, it would be made perfectly clear that not he alone, but others, had used the Secret Service money for the very vilest purposes—not for the detection of crime, but in the commission of abominable and unmentionable crimes which it was impossible to mention to the Committee.

MR. R. POWER said, he found that this year an additional sum of £10,000 was required for the Secret Service Fund, and he did not think the Committee had had a satisfactory explanation of the reason why this additional sum was required. He trusted that a full explanation would be given, and he should further like to know how much of the total sum of £33,000 was spent in England, and how much in Ireland? He thought that was a very important point—namely, how much was spent for foreign purposes, and how much in Ireland? His hon. Friend the Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington) had made a very serious charge, indeed, against one of the County Inspectors in Ireland. He (Mr. R. Power) knew nothing about the merits of the case, but he sincerely hoped that some hon. Member on the Treasury Bench would get up and offer some explanation. He was sorry that the Chief Secretary was not in his place, so that he might have informed the House whether the facts mentioned by his hon. Friend were correct or not. There was one thing that was quite certain, and it was that in Ireland the distribution of this money was looked upon with the greatest suspicion and distrust. He himself believed the distribution of Secret Service money in Ireland had done more harm than any good which could possibly accrue from it. No matter what charge was brought, and no matter what the antecedents of the accuser were, if he was only prepared to say he would sustain the charge, he was at once paid out of the Secret Service money. He thought that was a very evil thing, and if some hon. Member on the Treasury Bench would tell him the amount that was expended in Ireland, he ventured to say that the Irish Members would soon tell him the purposes for which it was expended. He further wished to know from the Government whether the charges which had been made by his hon. Friend against the County Inspector were true or not? If they were not true the sooner they were contradicted the better, and if they were true, then the sooner their correctness was admitted the better, and the sooner all such evils as this were remedied the better it would be for Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was inclined to believe that the Prime Minister knew absolutely nothing about this Vote. He believed it would be entirely repugnant to the right hon. Gentleman's character of mind, and the position he occupied, for him to have anything whatever to do with such a fund. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman took the same course as Mr. Fox, who, when Minister, said that he wanted to have nothing whatever to do with the Secret Service money, and to know nothing whatever about it, more than was necessary to prevent him from making a fool of himself in the House of Commons. He believed that was very much the position of the Prime Minister; but he did not think that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury could be in ignorance of the manner in which the fund was distributed. The Prime Minister had said that the very nature of the Service precluded the possibility of the Government communicating any details to the House as to the mode in which the money was spent. Anyone could understand the force of that argument, because, if they could elicit from the Treasury Bench how, when, and where the money was spent it would not be Secret Service money at all. But, although they knew very little about the use of the money, they did know that, until a very recent date, this fund was distributed between the different Secretaries of State; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had probably before now, as Secretary of State, had something to do with the disbursement of the money. Probably he had received a portion of it for his own Department, if he had been fortunate enough to require any of it. It was very well known that it was made use of by the Foreign Office, and there was good ground to believe that although some part might be used for the Foreign Office a larger proportion of it was now used in Ireland. The Committee were now asked to vote an extra sum of £10,000 for the financial year about to close, and from the bald statement in the Estimates it might be supposed that the £23,000 voted last year, together with the £10,000 they were now asked to vote, exhausted the whole Service for the year. But that was not the case, because £10,000 more were charged on the Consolidated Fund, which never came under the ken of the House of Commons at all, but were expended according to Statute. Therefore, they were voting this year £43,000 for this Secret Service. Now, when they considered that the amount voted last year was £23,000, and that it was more than sufficient for the purpose, because, according to the Appropriation Accounts issued last week, there was no less a sum, speaking from memory, than £4,863 returned into the Exchequer, it was perfectly plain that some very sudden, but considerable development, had recently taken place with regard to this Secret Service money. He should like to know whether any portion of it had been used in the Red Sea for the purpose of obtaining information as to the movements of the Mahdi and Osman Digna? One could understand that that might be a reasonable excuse for an increase of the expenditure; but he thought it would be difficult to persuade hon. Members sitting upon those Benches that that was the reason for the increase of the amount. They believed, whether rightly or wrongly, that the excessive expenditure was due to an increase of expenditure in the dark Departments of Dublin Castle. He should like to know in what proportion the fund was distributed between different Departments of the State; and whether the information was given to the Comptroller and Auditor General? That officer would have to give discharges for the money expended to the Secretary of State; and he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) wished to know if he was made acquainted with the different proportions in which it was distributed? He did not ask for a complete Return; but Irish Members were entitled to ask whether their country was subjected to the baneful influence of this Secret Service Fund? In the last Appropriation Account, rendered a few days ago, there was a singular item. The sum of £19,000 figured as Exchequer Extra Receipts under this Vote. It was, therefore, perfectly plain that, some way or other, and by somebody who had the administration of this fund, a certain amount of expenditure was incurred which was not recognized as an admissible charge against the Vote. Under no other circumstance was it conceivable that there could have been Exchequer receipts under the Secret Service Fund. He would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer when it was that he had to pay back the £19,000, and why it was that the sum was issued? It was quite plain that the person by whom it was issued had the Secret Service money at his command. He did not say that it was issued in Ireland, but it showed great laxity in the administration of the fund that it should have been issued at all, and he would like to know what particular Secretary of State was responsible for it?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that several questions had been put to him in the course of the discussion, and he would answer them as far as he was able. The hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington) asked a question in connection with some public officer, and had asked for further information upon the subject. He had listened carefully to the hon. Member, in order to ascertain, if possible, whether the matter was one connected with the Public Service; but he had altogether failed. He, therefore, was unable to say anything upon that subject, especially as he had nothing whatever to do with the administration of Irish affairs. He had been asked what portion of the Secret Service Fund was expended in Ireland, and several hon. Members had asked how much went to particular public officers. That was a question which it would be improper for him to answer.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he did not think he had gone as far as that. What he had meant to ask, and what he thought it was reasonable to ask, was, what proportion of the fund went to Ireland?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the question was, out of the whole fund, what portion went to one part of the country, and what to another? It would be most improper to state what proportion of the Secret Service money was employed in Ireland. It was not his duty to give to the House any information, direct or indirect which would indicate in what manner, at what time, and in what place Secret Service money was expended. Therefore, with every respect, he could give no assistance to hon. Gentlemen who asked for this information, the very condition of secrecy precluding him from giving it. In regard to the item of £19, to which reference had been made, if the Appropriation Accounts included an item of that nature, he could only say that it indicated great care on the part of the Treasury.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked, that the entire sum voted for the year 1882-3 was not expended.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the probable reason was that when the account was closed, there had come back an old repayment of a former year. As he had said already, he must point out to hon. Members who were criticizing this Vote, that the very nature of it precluded him from entering into any details. The amount required varied from year to year, and if all the money voted was not wanted, it was returned into the Exchequer as an unused balance. In fact, the amount required was constantly varying. In former years it was generally much larger than it was now. In his time he recollected when, instead of being £23,000, the same Vote was over £30,000. The amount had now been reduced to £23,000, because it was found, on an average of years, that it had not been necessary to expend the whole of the fund. This year it had been necessary to expend more than the amount voted; and just as they did right in returning into the Exchequer £4,800 which was unspent last year, so they felt themselves to be right in asking for a larger sum this year, finding that it was likely to be required.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 60; Noes 14: Majority 46.—(Div. List, No. 23.)

(17.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,733, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board for Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation."

Mr. SEXTON said, he wished to point out that there was a charge under this Vote of £640 for 20 inquiries under the Labourers' Act of last Session, and he wanted to know what was meant by it? Would the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury give an explanation? It would be interesting and valuable if the hon. Gentleman was able to give the Committee any indication of the success of the Labourers' Act under the administration of the Local Government Board last year. There were 32 counties in Ireland, and in most of them efforts had been made to bring the Act into practical operation, but without success. He would like to know how many applications for inquiry had been made by local Boards of Guardians, and how many of the 20 inquiries mentioned in the Vote had resulted in the successful launching of schemes for providing labourers' cottages? He was afraid the Local Government Board had not responded to the voice of Parliament in this particular, and there was every reason to believe that the Local Government Board had rather been an obstruction than a help to Parliament. He would, further, like to put a question to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury which was of great importance, and which referred to the conduct of the relieving officer of the Belmullet Union. The attention of the House had already been directed to the conduct of this officer, who, under the Government emigration scheme, by collusion and fraud, had aided in taking away a young girl of 17 from her parents. He should like to have an assurance that this relieving officer would be immediately dismissed from the Public Service. They had been told that, in the case of a public servant, an inquiry was more necessary and was of a much graver character than in the case of a private gentleman. He very much doubted whether that was so; but he hoped the Government would give an assurance that an inquiry would be made, and, unless this relieving officer could give a satisfactory answer to the charges preferred against him, that he should no longer be permitted to disgrace the Public Service of Ireland.

Colonel NOLAN said, there was one point connected with the Local Government Board which he thought it would be of great advantage to bring under the notice of the Committee. ["Order!"] He had already asked a Question about it that day, and he had given Notice of another; but he thought that there was a much better opportunity of raising the matter in Committee of Supply. The Committee were aware that all the Poor Law Unions in Ireland were under the Local Government Board, and all the rules by which they were governed emanated from the Local Government Board. Therefore, it was perfectly in Order to discuss anything that related to the Poor Law Unions in the House of Commons under this Vote. He might move the reduction of the Vote; but he did not wish to take that course, because he had no general charge to make against the Local Government Board at all. There were only one or two questions to which he desired to call attention. The first was the question of the seed rate in Ireland.

Mr. COURTNEY rose to Order. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had misunderstood the exclamation he (Mr. Courtney) had made just now. All he meant was that it would not be in Order to discuss the general administration of the Local Government Board under cover of the particular items of expenditure included in the present Vote.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was not prepared to acquiesce in the rule laid down by the Secretary to the Treasury, and that he was entitled to appeal from the ruling of the Secretary to the Treasury to the ruling of the Chair. There was an item down in the Vote of £240 for a temporary Inspector who had been imported under the Seed Act, and he knew that there had been an Inspector present in his part of the country, but whether a temporary Inspector or not he was unable to say. The question of the seed rate had been discussed in many Unions with the Inspector, who was an amiable and well-informed gentleman, and nothing but the rising of the Secretary to the Treasury would have induced him to move the reduction of the salary of this gentleman. Indeed, it would be a pity to move the reduction of his salary, because he was a valuable public officer, and the only thing that told against him was that he was under the Secretary to the Treasury. If he (Colonel Nolan) made a Motion for the reduction of the Vote it would certainly put him in Order, and enable him to continue the discussion, which was thoroughly germane to the Vote, because in Committee of Supply they could raise all these questions, and bring them in easily, one after the other, whenever the Secretary to the Treasury thought fit to raise a point of Order. He (Colonel Nolan) challenged the whole administration under the Local Government Board; but he did not wish to complain of the Board generally, because they had behaved wrongly in connection with the seed rate.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that he must confine himself to the items to which this Supplementary Vote refers. If the point he wishes to raise has reference to the salaries and wages provided under this Vote, he will be entitled, under the head of Salaries and Wages, to allude to the subject.

Colonel NOLAN said, he believed the gentleman to whom he referred was connected with the working of the Seed Rate Act, and he would move the reduction of that gentleman's salary in order to put himself in Order in raising the question. He did not object to the seed rate, although there had been a great many disputes under it. He believed a number of the complaints under the rate were really complaints against the fairness of the rate; but the rate itself was demanded with the poor rate, and in many cases where it was not paid the ratepayer's vote had been taken away. He would give as a case in point the Union of Loughrea, where the ratepayers objected to pay the seed rate, but offered to pay the poor rate. It would be remembered that in the debates upon the seed rate the Irish Members were anxious that the rate should be paid, but they were also anxious that no man should be disqualified because he did not pay it. A great many persons refused to pay the seed rate because they were of opinion that they did not get full value for their money, and he thought it was wrong that the Local Government Board should deprive a man of his vote because he challenged the seed rate. He should like to have an opinion from the Solicitor General for Ireland upon the subject. His own belief was that if a man offered to pay the ordinary poor rate he did not forfeit his vote, and he knew that it was never intended that the ratepayers should be so situated. From his own constituency he had received strong complaints upon the subject. He, therefore, thought it his duty to bring the matter before the Committee; and he should like the Solicitor General to say whether the Local Government Board were not going beyond the full length of their tether in ordering a prosecution where the ratepayer had refused to pay the seed rate but had offered to pay the poor rate?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) asked him for an opinion. If the hon. and gallant Member pressed the question, he was afraid that he should have to decide against him, because, under the Statute, the seed rate was imposed and collected as part of the poor rate, and all the incidents of the poor rate were attached to it. It would, therefore, follow that the non-payment of the rate would result in the loss of the vote on the part of the person refusing to pay it.

MR. COURTNEY said, that a question had been put to him by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The hon. Member would be aware that the Local Government Board was not under his (Mr. Courtney's) administration. He was only casually brought into relation with it on questions of finance. With regard to the question of the hon. Member in reference to the Belmullet Union, he believed that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary had the matter under his examination now; but he apprehended that it would require a very careful investigation before an answer could be given to the direct appeal of the hon. Member. He believed the accuracy of the statement which had been made in reference to the relieving officer was disputed, and it would be necessary for some time to elapse while communications were passing between the authorities. At the same time, he would assure the hon. Member that the matter would not be lost sight of. In reference to the Labourers' Act of last Session, that also was under the administration of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary. He believed it was the fact that the Local Government Board did not put the Act in motion, but that it was put in motion by the Boards of Guardians themselves. He had seen a coloured map of the country showing those parts in which the Act had been put in motion, and he found that it covered a considerable part of the South. The schemes that were passed by the Boards of Guardians were sent up to the Local Government Board; but it required time before full effect could be given to them. The expenditure attending the schemes already sent up would amount to more than £500,000, so that it was not correct to say that the initial step had only been taken in a small degree, because it had been taken in a large and very considerable degree. The hon. Gentleman had asked a question in reference to an item which appeared in the Vote for the cost of inquiries. That item had no reference to the Labourers' Act, but applied to the incidental expenses of the Local Government Board. These money advances had been made, not in connection with the Labourers' Act of last year, but for conducting the ordinary inquiries of the Board. There were other incidental expenses for which provision was made last year, and the sum now asked for was the difference between the amount voted in the Estimates and the expense of the inquiries —the difference between the actual cost and the sum they were originally expected to cost. There would be a further sum in connection with these inquiries, because the expenses referred to in the Vote only related to inquiries held before the 31st of March. There had been no want of action on the part of the Local Government Board. As soon as a scheme was brought under their notice they had the right of inquiring into it, and already inquiries had been made into a large number of schemes.

MR. R. POWER said, he thought the hon Member had given the Committee as much information as it was possible for him to give under the circumstances, seeing that the hon. Gentleman, as he had himself said, was in no way connected with the Local Government Board. The difficulty the Irish Members had to contend with was that there was nobody connected with that Department in the House. He had expected upon the last Vote that the Chief Secretary would have been present to give the Committee some information. When the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) spoke of the disqualification of a ratepayer because he declined to pay the seed rate, although he was not unwilling to pay the poor rate, he understood the Solicitor General to say that he could not give an absolute opinion. Now, what the Irish Members wanted was an opinion. If the ratepayers were to be disqualified from voting because they did not pay the seed rate, the sooner they knew it the better, and they ought not to be left in the dark upon the question. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury did not answer two of the questions which had been put to him by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). One was, how many applications had been made under the Labourers' Act? and the other was, how many of those applications had been successful? If the hon. Gentleman could give them an answer to those two questions, he might be able, to some extent, to satisfy the curiosity of the Irish Members as to the items contained in this Vote. But what he principally wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury had reference to a matter which was referred to some six months ago. About that time a deputation waited upon the Secretary to the Treasury. They did not want to borrow any money from him, although they understood that he was willing to accede to such a request, but they only asked the hon. Gentleman to consult the Local Government Board and ascertain if it was a fact that the Corporation of Waterford had exceeded their borrowing powers or not? That was a simple question and it was asked six months ago. Application for an answer had been made day after day to the hon. Gentleman and the Local Government Board, but up to this day the Corporation of Waterford had received no reply, either from the Local Government Board or the hon. Gentleman. He should be glad if the Solicitor General for Ireland would give his opinion whether the Corporation of Waterford had exceeded their borrowing powers or not? It was too much to ask them to wait for six months before they could get an answer to a simple question of that sort from the Treasury. He believed that there was no more incompetent authority in Ireland than the Local Government Board. This question was raised originally in April last, and the Corporation were put to the expense of sending a deputation over from Ireland. That deputation had an interview with the Secretary to the Treasury who, no doubt, behaved in the most courteous manner, and who said he would do all he could to give them information on the subject, and that he would communicate with them immediately. Six months had now gone by, and they were in exactly the same position they were six months ago. He, therefore, appealed to the Secretary to the Treasury to give now the information for which they asked.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he had been in constant communication with those who attended to these matters, and only last week had gathered that negotiations were taking place which it was believed would lead to a settlement of the question referred to by the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan). The difficulty with regard to the Corporation of Waterford had arisen from a series of transactions; but whether the Corporation had, or had not, exceeded its borrowing powers, he was unable to state. Then with regard to the applications under the Labourers' Act, he believed that applications had been made from 70 or 80 Unions, and that the amount applied for exceeded £470,000.

Mr. SYNAN said, he regarded the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury with reference to the question of the borrowing powers of the Corporation of Waterford as not quite satisfactory. He would not enter into the legal question involved, but would merely say that, in his opinion, formed upon reports which had reached him, the Corporation must be a very extravagant one if those borrowing powers had been exceeded. He would recommend the hon. Gentleman to inquire into the facts very closely, because his experience was that the Treasury did not move very briskly in inquiries of this kind. He would remark, with reference to the question of a more limited character raised by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway as to the solvency or capacity of some of the ratepayers in the Union mentioned to pay the seed rate, that although he (Mr. Synan) did not know much about their solvency or insolvency, he regarded the statement of his hon. and gallant Friend as perfectly conclusive on the point. He thought it a hard thing that the ratepayers should be disqualified, and he trusted the Local Government Board would, at once, inquire and ascertain whether the rates were refused because the ratepayers were insolvent so far as the seed rate was concerned. But then came the great Constitutional question which the Solicitor General for Ireland refused to answer, because he was afraid, as he said, to place his hon. and gallant Friend in a difficulty. He was quite sure his hon. and gallant Friend was not afraid of that difficulty, and his (Mr. Synan's) answer was that the collector might take the poor rate, and that if he took the poor rate and gave a receipt for it, but did not get the seed rate, the individual would not be disqualified. He thought that the Local Government Board should come to that conclusion, and that the Solicitor General for Ireland should give his opinion on the subject. He believed the Solicitor General for Ireland would find that disqualification arose from non-payment of the poor rate, and unless the Seed Act contained some provision to the contrary he (Mr. Synan) maintained that the Local Government Board acted unconstitutionally in disqualifying ratepayers for non-payment of the seed rate. His contention was that if the Guardians gave a receipt for the poor rate the ratepayers ought not to be disqualified. Then came another question with regard to this vote — the charge for what were called Incidental Expenses. Now there were a certain number of persons going about Ireland at that moment with the object of making inquiries under the Labourers' Act. He asked what were they doing? Had any information been furnished as to what they had done? In his own county he was in a position to say that they had done nothing; he had watched the progress of these inquirers, and he had seen that only one enquiry had taken place, and that inquiry was only half performed. But by this Vote the money was taken beforehand; the persons in question had to be paid beforehand; the Local Government Board obtained the money to pay them before the work was done. In his opinion, until they had done the work they should not be paid. The work to be done by these 20 inquirers in Ireland was incomplete, or, rather, he would say that their inquiries up to the present moment had led to no result whatsoever, and were not likely to do so. The Local Government Board told the Guardians in Ireland that they could not build labourers' cottages unless they paid £5 7*s.* 6*d.* per cent on the loan; the Guardians naturally refused to pay that percentage; the Local Government Board threw them back upon the Treasury, and Irish Members heard from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) that the Treasury and the Local Government Board had nothing to do with the matter. They had, therefore, a proof that the Act was a nullity. The Committee was asked for money to pay for inquiries which had led to nothing and would lead to nothing so long as this Minute lasted, and so long as the Local Government Board sheltered itself behind that Minute. Returning to the question of the seed rate, he said Irish Members were entitled to an answer from the Treasury Bench as to whether the ratepayers, although they might be insolvent, having paid the poor rate, were or were not entitled to vote. The Committee would know perfectly well that, when the Seed Act was passing through the House, it was generally considered that some of the ratepayers would be insolvent and that some of the money would be lost, and he repeated that the Local Government Board had no right to disqualify persons who, having paid the poor rate, were, in his opinion, clearly entitled to vote. He did not know what opinion or position the Solicitor General for Ireland held with relation to this matter; but he presumed, from his unwillingness to answer the question of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), that he was in communication with others upon the subject. Under the circumstances he should feel it his duty to support his hon. and gallant Friend in any course which he might think proper to adopt, because no explanation had been forthcoming, and he (Mr. Synan) held that the Local Government Board had acted unconstitutionally.

MR. MAYNE said, it was to be regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who was President of the Irish Local Government Board, was not in his place. The right hon. Gentleman might reasonably have assumed that questions would present themselves during the discussion on this Vote which would require his attention and explanation. Now, with regard to the Inspectors under the Labourers' Act, the investigations which were on foot in connection with that Act were only at their commencement, and it was clearly necessary that whatever the result of these investigations might be—whether the applications of the sanitary authorities were granted or refused—public confidence ought to be won for the decision arrived at.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. MAYNE, continuing, said, that it was most essential that the result of these investigations should carry with them public confidence. But, so far as he was aware, the decisions arrived at up to the present time had not secured the confidence of the public in Ireland. And, therefore, he said it was both advisable and necessary that steps should be taken at the commencement of the proceedings to ensure that justice and fair play should be administered throughout these investigations. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan) had complained that no investigations had been held in his county; but in his (Mr. Mayne's) county—Tipperary—at least one had been held. With regard to that inquiry, which was held on the 20th of February last, the impression upon the public was that it was most one-sided and partizan in its character—strong terms, indeed, to be applied to an investigation of the kind. It was stated, also, that the Inspector, Mr. Burke, had been rude and discourteous, and that of itself was a matter of considerable importance; investigations of this kind, just like those which took place under the Arrears Act, would not admit of being approached or carried on in any such spirit. Mr. Burke had permitted the landlords who appeared to be interested in the investigations to examine and cross-examine the Poor Law Guardians; but he refused to those Poor Law Guardians the right to examine the landlords who stated themselves to be interested, and he prevented gentlemen who were present and who felt a strong interest in the question under consideration—clergymen amongst them—from intervening on the ground that they were non-professional men. These gentlemen had performed very useful work preliminary to these investigations, and had succeeded, in many cases, in bringing them to a successful issue. These non-professional gentlemen, however—clergymen amongst the number, three or four of whom were, he believed, Catholic priests—had been refused permission to interfere or ask any question whatever at the investigation itself. This was all calculated to cause a very unfortunate feeling in connection with these investigations which, as he had said, were only now commencing. If the present spirit were to be allowed to continue, there could be no doubt that incalculable mischief would be the result. The Act of last Session would be largely inoperative, because the confidence of the people would be shaken in its administration. The expenses of the investigations, according to the items set down on the Estimate, were very serious. Each inquiry, it seemed, cost £32—£20 for advertising, and £12 for shorthand writer. The total was not very great; but, if Mr. Burke's ideas were to be carried out, it would involve on the parties who had created the inquiries a much larger expenditure than the Government were prepared to incur in connection with them. If the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant—who was the President of the Local Government Board in Ireland—had been in his place, he would, probably, have been able to say something in this discussion to reassure the public in those places in which the investigations were held, and to induce them to refrain from too hastily condemning the inquiries, which they undoubtedly were doing at the present time. He held in his hand a letter from a clergyman, who spoke in strong terms of the proceedings which had taken place. It was neither necessary nor desirable to read the letter; but, certainly, to judge from its contents, it was plain that the steps which had been taken, and which had produced the unfortunate feeling to which he had referred, should be reversed; it was plain that the investigations should be approached in a spirit altogether different from that in which they had been approached hitherto, unless the legislation of last Session, which was intended to produce such good results, were to be allowed to become a failure.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he thought that there was a good deal in what had fallen from the last speaker which was deserving of attention; but he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) rose mainly for the purpose of expressing regret that on this occasion, when they were discussing the Public Expenditure, they had not the advantage of the co-operation of the great Conservative Party. Throughout the whole of last Session there was no subject on which Members of that Party had more frequently risen to complain of the action of the Government; and at the very commencement of the present Session the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had declared that, above all things, the Estimates required to be sifted and examined by the great Conservative Party. Her Majesty's Government had been, and were, being called on from time to time to give up the time at their disposal in order to enable the noble Lord and his Friends to investigate the extravagant habits of Her Majesty's Government. He rose for the purpose of saying, however, that in spite of what had been said to the contrary, the confidence of the Conservative Party in the Government was so complete that on this, the very first night on which the Estimates were before the House, they were content to allow those Estimates to pass unchallenged.

Mr. CAUSTON said, he should like to add a word or two to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), because that hon. Gentleman had omitted to mention a subject which was rather important. He had omitted to mention the fact that the "Count" was moved by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and that that hon. and learned Gentleman, immediately he had moved it, left the House. This course on the part of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport showed that even he, who was sometimes left to act as Leader of his Party—[Mr. WARTON: No, no!]—yes; to show that even he did not desire to remain in the House to hear the Estimates discussed.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, the Conservatives were not the only persons who deprived the Committee of their company on this occasion. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan), who was President of the Local Government Board in Ireland, was also absent, and the Committee were discussing these Votes without the information and assistance of the only official who could throw any light on the details of the expenditure. It was evident, from the answers of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) to-night, and on various other occasions lately when he had had to step into the breach to supply the place of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, that it was not his forte to go into details on this subject, and the consequence was that the Committee were left very much in the dark as to the details. There were two sums in the Estimates to which he (Mr. O'Brien) wished to call attention—namely, £429 and £334—sums asked for for temporary Inspectors engaged in carrying out a system of enforced emigration, which the Local Government Board of Ireland had been practising for the past year. If he (Mr. O'Brien) was right in his surmise, he thought no Irish Member was justified in voting one penny towards the salaries of these Inspectors or those who employed them. To his mind there was nothing more appalling shown by any Return supplied by order of the House than that which was disclosed by the Return put into the hands of Members only yesterday, showing the rate at which emigration was going on in Ireland. As if the amount of voluntary emigration going on was not enough, they had this House granting £50,000 for the depletion of the country—for the purpose of assisting the Irish Local Government Board in the carrying out of a wholesale system of transportation from whole baronies or counties in the West of Ireland, without any sort of satisfactory statement to the House as to what became of the unfortunate people so transported. The Queen's Speech had said something about substantial improvement in the state of Ireland. He did not know whether what was meant by that was that 108,000 of the decreased population of Ireland had been sent away from that unfortunate country last year—21 out of every 1,000 of the inhabitants. The emigration from the other Provinces of Ireland was bad enough, but that from Connaught was something fearful, and was, he believed, entirely attributable to the system of forced emigration which Her Majesty's Government had been carrying on through the instrumentality of the Local Government Board. What did he find? Why, that whilst in 1882 there went from Connaught only 18,150 persons, in 1883 28,819 emigrated, or 35 out of every 1,000 of the inhabitants. What had become of this 10,000 people—for he took it for granted that the excess of emigration in 1883 over the figures for 1882 simply represented the number of people who had been kidnapped out of the country by Mr. Tuke's Committee, with the connivance and the help of the Local Government Board? He thought the Committee had a right to some sort of information as to what had happened to the people whom the Local Government Board had driven or seduced out of the country. The only thing they did know was that something like 50 unfortunate families had had to be sent back from the other side of the world, and that in America official after official, including the President of the United States and his Minister in England, had had to remonstrate against the cruel system of deporting the unfortunate paupers of Ireland to the coasts of America. They had heard, as he said, of a few of these miserable people being sent home again. But what happened to the bulk of the emigrants? Those who had been sent home had been driven to the workhouses, after parting with every little bit of property they had in the world, some of them after selling their interest in some little piece of land or other property. Many of those who returned came back of themselves, parting with everything in the shape of property to enable them to do so, and, on their arrival in Ireland, their fate was to go to the workhouse. He contended that in the case of every one of these people there was a direct criminality attaching to the Government—to the Local Government Board of Ireland, and Her Majesty's Ministers, who had warranted this system of deportation. He, certainly, should be no party to letting the Irish Local Government Board out of any little difficulty they might be in in connection with this emigration business, and he, therefore, begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the amount of £750, which would cover the charge for these two Inspectors, who, if he suspected rightly, had been engaged in this work of emigration.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,983, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board for Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation."—(*Mr. O'Brien.*)

Mr. MOLLOY said, there were two items in the Estimates which he must admit he did not understand, and which he, therefore, would ask Her Majesty's Government to explain. The items were "£42 for fees to legal adviser for opinions as to the operation of the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883," and "£640 for 20 inquiries under the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883." It was within the knowledge of a good many people that a Bill had been introduced this Session on the subject of the Labourers' Act. What the opinions of this "legal adviser" were, and what were these inquiries, should be made public, or, at least, if not made public in the widest meaning of the phrase, should be communicated to hon. Members. He had not seen them, nor had he heard anything about them. As to emigration, there was one aspect of the question which he did not think had been mentioned yet. He had made a search last year for some statistics on the subject, but had been unable to find any—had discovered that in this country there were no statistics of emigration. Statistics, however, had been prepared in Germany, and from them it was easy to calculate that the sum of money taken out of the country by the emigration of 108,000 people amounted to £10,800,000. He should like the Government to give them some explanation on this point, if they could, or, at least, to give some opinion with regard to it.

Colonel NOLAN said, he did not doubt that the "legal adviser" who had been employed by the Government to give an opinion as to the Labourers' Act was a very eminent person; but he (Colonel Nolan) believed the counsel had given the Government a wrong opinion. He was afraid the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland was not with him when he said that the opinion the Government had secured was a wrong one; but he did not rely upon his own view of the matter. There had been an opinion given by an eminent counsel in Dublin, Mr. White, which was to the effect that there was a great blot in the law as it at present stood. Let the Government look at the case of Tuam, which was very exceptionally placed. The town hall was burnt down; the tolls produced some £800 a-year, and it was desired to raise a very moderate sum—say, £1,200 or £1,400—for the construction of a new town hall, the money to be paid back by means of the toll in two or three years. It was declared, however, that there was not the necessary machinery for undertaking the work of building a town hall, and that, therefore, the money could not be raised for the purpose. That declaration was made owing to a defect in the law or in the opinion of a learned Queen's Counsel—perhaps the latter. At any rate, that was what was said. The contention was that because the town had no sanitary authority it had no use for a town hall—that it might have such a building if it had such an authority. Well, to his mind, the question as to whether or not the town possessed a sanitary authority of its own had nothing whatever to do with the question as to the desirability of its having a town hall; and to his mind it seemed that the contention of the authorities landed them in an absurdity. It seemed it was owing to the legal opinion which the Government had obtained that the town hall was not constructed. He wished to call the attention of the Government clearly to this matter, and to show them that they ought to correct the blot in one of two ways—either by interpreting the law differently, or by reconstructing it. Surely, such a town as Tuam should be allowed to raise money for the building of a town hall—a most useful purpose. What he would ask was, whether the statement of fact he had made was correct; and, if so, whether the Government intended to take steps to remedy the evil he had pointed out?

MR. COURTNEY said, he did not know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would be able to answer the legal question raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman; at any rate, he (Mr. Courtney) did not feel competent to do so. The hon. Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) had put a question to him about emigration, and he had understood the hon. Member to say that he had searched in the Library for some statistics in regard to emigration without being able to find any. This he (Mr. Courtney) had been very much surprised to hear from the hon. Gentleman, because, as a matter of fact, there was a Report on the subject of emigration issued annually by the Board of Trade. He (Mr. Courtney) had received a copy of it, and he should have thought the hon. Member would have had one also, or, at any rate, that he would have been able to find one for the purpose of reference.

MR. MOLLOY said, the question he asked the hon. Member was, if he knew whether there were any statistics in this country similar to those published by the German Government, showing the loss which accrued to a country through emigration? In Germany the cost to the State of every individual up to the age of 14 was £100. If the cost to the State was the same in Ireland, and if the amount of emigration was as was stated—as there was no reason to doubt it was—namely, 108,000 last year, it was clear that the loss to the State owing to the emigration of those people, each of whom had cost £100, was £10,800,000. This £10,800,000 was money paid in the shape of rates and otherwise expended on the emigrants at home, and rendered, by the emigrations, a complete loss. He took the age of the emigrants at 14 or 16, or at the time when the human machine became productive. His main point was that the statistics applying to Germany in this regard were to be obtained, but that there were none such to be discovered in reference to Ireland.

MR. COURTNEY said, that in this country we possessed no statistics of that kind, having no bureau, or office, through which such information could be obtained. As to the inquiries which had just been made concerning the legal adviser of the Local Government Board, he (Mr. Courtney) was sorry the hon. Gentleman who put them had not been present earlier on in the discussion of the Vote, for if he had been he would have heard the explanation which had been given concerning the investigations which had taken place. The hon. Gentleman was a Member of the House when the Labourers' Act was passed, and should have remembered that under that measure it was necessary for the sanitary authorities to prepare a scheme, for that scheme to be advertised in the newspapers, for persons who might be affected by it to be communicated with, for the scheme to be sent down to the Local Government Board, and for that Board to send down an Inspector to make inquiries. With reference to the exact items for advertising, the price of the advertisements was regulated—it was fixed at a certain sum. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) was an evidence of the strong view that hon. Gentleman took on the question of emigration. The hon. Member evidently entertained a strong opinion against emigration, and desired to record a protest; and that being the case, and seeing that the policy of the Government on this matter had been discussed over and over again, he (Mr. Courtney) hoped it would not be unbecoming to abstain from a debate and go to a Vote.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, that he had raised the question whether the Committee and the country were not entitled to some official information as to what became of the emigrants whom the Local Government Board deported from Ireland. Up to the present, the only information which the Irish public had in reference to the fate of these poor people was, in the first place, the admitted fact that a large number of them had had to come home to the workhouses after being sent out paupers to the other side of the world, and, in the second place, the report of Mr. Tuke's Committee. He did not care, at this moment, to animadvert on the motives of Mr. Tuke's Committee. He was sure that, in their own way, the gentlemen forming that Committee had philanthropic ends in view; but he was equally sure that, in striving after the attainment of those ends, they were doing incalculable mischief to Ireland—more harm than if they were committing acts openly to the detriment of the people. All the official information vouchsafed was contained in the Reports of the Committee—Reports more or less coloured by the prepossessions of their authors. The Government had given £50,000 for the purpose of assisting emigration; and having given that sum through the Local Government Board, which was the Department officially interested in the subject of emigration in Ireland, he contended that the House and the country had a right to some official information as to the results of that expenditure.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) seemed to think that hon. Gentlemen had no right to speak deprecatingly of Mr. Tuke's Committee; but he (Mr. Biggar) thought he was right in declaring that Mr. Tuke's Committee were malicious in their objects. The main object of the Committee was to drive away a large portion of the population from Ireland—to drive away from their homes people who were sure very soon to die in the country to which they were sent from the effects of the climate. Railway contractors and Steamship Companies were the persons Mr. Tuke's Committee sought to benefit. The emigrants were sent to places where railways were being made in order that the contractors might have labour at a cheap rate—railways were, in fact, being constructed in other countries partly at the expense of the Irish ratepayers. He contended that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was a party to this conduct on the part of Mr. Tuke's Committee, and that Her Majesty's Government in this House were also to blame for lending their countenance to the Lord Lieutenant and Mr. Tuke's Committee. All the Irish Members who took an interest in this matter had protested again and again against the system of kidnapping the people and driving them into Canada. It was clear enough to him, although it did not seem clear to some people, that the Government were determined to drive the people out of Ireland—to depopulate that country. He believed they would fail in their attempt, however determined they might be; and, so far as he was concerned, he believed it to be the duty of Irish Members to protest, as strongly as they could, and to point out, as clearly as possible, what their opinion was as to the gross misconduct of the Government, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and all the parties concerned in these transactions. They knew very well that this "Mr. Tuke's Committee" belonged to a gang of philanthropists, or pretended philanthropists, who were against slavery and that sort of thing, and in favour of the moral and social improvement of the people, and yet these were the persons most anxious to bring about the eviction of those who were unable to pay the rents which it was shown it was impossible for them to pay. He had great pleasure in voting for the reduction of this Vote, and was only sorry he was not able in a more effective manner to mark his opinion of the misconduct of all parties who had to do with this enforced emigration.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was very sorry to have to comment adversely on the conduct of the Government in the absence of such an Official as the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Irish Members, he thought, had reason to complain that, when Irish statistics were brought under the notice of the Committee concerning almost every question of policy which had occupied the attention of the Irish Government, the Chief Officer of that Government was not in his place. The reason they had great ground for objection and complaint was this—that, at the present moment, Ireland was governed practically by a despotism which was irresponsible to Parliament. The way in which the Government regulated the work of Ireland in Parliament was this. There was in this House a Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was not a Member of the Cabinet, and who was not primarily responsible for the Government of Ireland, but who acted as the mouthpiece of another Representative of the Government who was not in this House, but in "another place," and could take advantage of his position. He rejoiced that his hon. Friends had taken advantage of this opportunity to raise the question of emigration. He thought it was the duty of Irish Members to urge the question of emigration in this House, in season and out of season, on every occasion on which the question could be brought before the House on good or on bad grounds. What was the position of the House with regard to this question? Allusion had been made to the money voted last year by Parliament for the promotion of emigration from Ireland; and he would assert that the money which was obtained from Parliament for promoting emigration from Ireland, judging by the manner in which it had been spent, had been obtained on false pretences—for what was the ground upon which the money was obtained from Parliament? The ground upon which it was obtained was that there were certain districts in Ireland in which the population was congested, and where the holdings were so small that it was impossible for the people to make a living, and, therefore, it was necessary to transfer the people to a country where there was as much land as was necessary, But the money which had been so obtained to send people away from the congested districts in Ireland had been frequently spent to send away comparatively well-to-do artizans in the towns. In his own constituency the Rev. Father Dooley, who, he believed, had done as good and as great work as any man in Ireland—who had established a building society which served the double purpose of erecting better dwellings for the working classes, and providing means of investment of their money—had assured him that a native of that town—Galway—had come to him the night before he was to leave Ireland, and drew out £200 which he had invested. On the following day that man, with his wife and his mother-in-law and six children, were emigrated at the expense of the ratepayers out of the money voted by Parliament for the relief of the really poor and suffering people. He had been further informed that one of the officials who were carrying out this policy of emigration went to the barracks when the Militia were being disbanded, and invited any of the enterprizing and discharged warriors to take passage to America as tenants from the congested districts. In view of these things, he maintained that it was the duty of the Irish Members to raise this question in season and out of season; and one reason why he said this was that he did not think the Irish people had yet grasped the largeness and the significance of this problem. He was reading an article some time ago in a Conservative English newspaper, which gave some statistics with respect to the emigration from Ireland, and drew attention to the extraordinary fact that the emigration from Ireland was not only larger than from anywhere else, but that it was confined almost exclusively to the young and the energetic and the strong. This was proved by the fact that the marriage and birth rates in Ireland were lower than almost anywhere else. What did that show? Not only that the Government were largely diminishing the population of Ireland, but were taking away from that population the heart and core of a nation's strength—namely, the young, the energetic, and the strong. He did not always agree with his hon. Friend; but on this occasion he joined with his hon. Friend, for, watching the whole of the proceedings of the Lord Lieutenant, he was driven to the conclusion that the object of Lord Spencer had been further to deplete the population of Ireland. He was led to the same conclusion with respect to other Members of the Administration. A prominent Member of the Government—its most recent and distinguished convert—had declared that to spend a few millions on Irish emigration would pay them well. In other words, the noble Lord who had made this cold-blooded miserable declaration, ventured to lay down the principle that this country would be justified in spending money to weaken the forces of the Irish people. The present Lord Lieutenant had, he thought, done his best to act on the principle laid down with brutal frankness and candour by his distinguished Colleague. There were two lines of policy. The first was to offer every possible bribe to the people to induce them to emigrate; the other was to make Ireland so intolerable to men to live in that they would be anxious to go to America or anywhere else, provided that they could take an everlasting farewell of Ireland under the rule of the present Lord Lieutenant. He held to the opinion that it had been the deliberate policy of Lord Spencer, the Grand Master of the chief Orange Lodge of Ireland, to adopt the principle of emigration, and to use the money placed at his disposal by this House, not for the good of the Irish people, not to provide happier homes for those who were in need, but to reduce the Irish people in their struggle for the restoration of their national independence.

Mr. R. POWER said, he thought it would be contrary to Lord Spencer's whole opinions, and to the traditions of his own Party, if he pursued any other policy than that which he had adopted. He remembered well that when Lord Kimberley went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, he declared that the best policy for Ireland would be to turn it into a large pasture farm for the benefit of people in England. It had been said that, perhaps, from his own point of view, the noble Lord was quite right, because cows and sheep had never any grievances, and never made any row about anything that happened in Ireland. He considered that his hon. friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) was quite right in raising this question to-night, and he hoped he and his Friends would go to a Division upon it. He could not understand why the Government refused to tell them what became of these unfortunate people who had been enticed out of Ireland. They knew that the people had gone; they knew that 50 families had gone from the workhouses in Ireland to America; that they had been landed, and, after remaining there a few days, had come back, and been sent again to the workhouses. Surely the Government ought not to persist in a course which brought misery and hardship upon many poor people, and could bring no advantage to the country. When it was found that there was an increase of £19,350 for emigration this year over the amount last year, surely the Irish Members had a right to protest against this system being carried on any further, seeing that the Vote of this money to promote emigration—against which many protested at that time, for in those days, though they could do little of what some hon. Members called Obstruction, but which they called free discussion, they discussed the matter night after night—was granted for the relief of the congested districts. Had the money been spent in that way? The statistics proved that it had not. They proved that from Connaught, where there were congested districts, but which he believed ought to be relieved by migration rather than by emigration, there had been 28,819 emigrants, but from Protestant and loyal Ulster there had been 29,918; so that, in fact, the policy of the Government had been this—they had drawn a greater number of emigrants from loyal Ulster than from disloyal Connaught. Looking at these facts, the Irish Members had certainly a right to ask the Government to pause before they went further with this system of emigration. It was a system which had brought a great deal of ruin, not only upon the farmers, but upon the landlords; and it was a system against which the Irish Members were bound to protest, for they went on the broad principle that in Ireland they had a right to a population of 8,000,000 or 10,000,000; but the English Government had now, after 80 or 85 years of what they called Legislative Union, to confess that they found the population decreasing every day. They had done everything they could to decrease the population; but although they had tried to scatter the people all over the world, they found the people still disloyal. He hoped his hon. Friend would divide upon this question, and offer every resistance to the Vote.

MR. LEAMY said, that, as he understood the Chief Secretary for Ireland was only temporarily absent from the House, and was expected to return in the course of an hour or an hour and a-half, he, therefore, wished to put it to the Secretary to the Treasury whether he would not postpone this Vote until the right hon. Gentleman returned? It was an extraordinary thing that the House was asked to grant this money for the Local Government Board during the absence of the Chief Secretary. If the right hon. Gentleman was absent in Ireland, he could understand this course; but as the Chief Secretary was only temporarily absent, he would appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury to postpone the Vote. He was sure the hon. Member was anxious to give any information he could on the subject; but, unfortunately, he knew nothing whatever about the Local Government Board. There was a question he wished to ask the Chief Secretary on the matter which had agitated the public mind in the Recess—namely, by whose authority the famous Emigration Circular was printed and published? Was it paid for out of the Secret Service Fund? The hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, be anxious to answer the question if he knew; but he did not know. The only person who knew was the Chief Secretary, and the Committee were entitled to information before they allowed this Vote to pass. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had stated that the question of emigration had been fully discussed, and the English Members had already given their answer and decision on the matter.

MR. COURTNEY said, that what he had stated was not that the English Members had given their decision, but that the matter had been often discussed.

MR. LEAMY said, the hon. Gentleman had stated that those who were in favour of emigration must be held to have a kindly feeling for the Irish people. It was possible they might have that kindly feeling; but it was quite certain that they wanted to get rid of the Irish people. St. Patrick, no doubt, had a kindly feeling towards snakes; but he banished them from Ireland all the same. Mr. Tuke was, possibly, a philantrophist, whose sole desire was to benefit the Irish people; but it was an old maxim that charity began at home. It was true there were congested districts in Connaught; but there were also congested districts in the East End of London, as was shown by the present cry as to how the poor lived. Why did not Mr. Tuke go there and put forward a scheme for taking the people away to the West, where they could get employment and find a better chance of making a living than they could here? Not at all; he must experiment in Ireland. Ireland was the grand ground of experiment by all Englishmen. If only they could find out from any English Member when it would be considered that the Irish population had been sufficiently reduced, that would be some comfort. When the population was 8,000,000, the English Government said—"Let us get rid of 2,000,000, and we shall be all right." Two millions had gone away, but English Ministers were still crying out. When would they be satisfied to stop, and what did they gain by this system? Irish Members, like the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, had said, and said truly, that there was to-day more widespread discontent in Ireland than there had been at any time since England first put her yoke upon that country. The Government sent the people away, and hoped by lessening the number of the people to break their spirit; but in that they had failed. Were the people loyal because they had gone to America or Australia? Did they look back with gratitude to England because they had sent them away? Did these people, who were now far away from her rule, look back and say they thanked English Ministers for sending them away? The Government knew very well that, when these people made money away, they looked back with hatred to the men who had sent them away, while the people at home were more discontented than ever. If the Government could only show anything at all to justify their policy, or when they would be satisfied that a sufficient number had gone away, there might be something to justify the policy of Mr. Tuke. Whatever might be the question now, he wished to know why there was not someone present to give the information required? And he was surprised to find that this question had been raised at all. Even though the question under this Vote was the salaries of the gentlemen who worked this system, no answer could be got to the questions asked. As there were several other Votes to be taken to-night, he thought this Vote might very well be postponed until the Chief Secretary, who, he believed, was within the precincts of the House, returned.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he wished to join in the appeal of the hon. Member that this Vote should not be taken in the absence of the Chief Secretary. He could answer for it that the greatest discontent would be aroused in Ireland, not only in the National Press, but largely among the hierarchy of the West, who were so much interested in the question of emigration. In the alternative scheme of migration, in which, in conjunction with friends belonging to both political Parties, they had borrowed from the Land Commission the services of Professor Baldwin, the question of the latter's salary must be considered; but it seemed useless to discuss the question of the Local Government Board when the President of the Board was absent. Such a course would be very much resented in Ireland, and he sincerely hoped that what he supposed was a mere accident would not be allowed to develop into a grievance in Ireland.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he did not wish this discussion to close without saying a few words upon the question. He thought what had now taken place justified some observations that were made a few nights ago as to the mistake that had been committed in not giving greater prominence to this question of emigration at a time when a distinct Motion might have been submitted to the House upon it, and some clear recommendation could have been made with a view to retarding the process of emigration by providing a better means of livelihood for the crowded populations of the West of Ireland. He considered that the proposal of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy), that this Vote should be for the present postponed, was a very reasonable proposition. It was, he was sure, not at all in accordance with the wish of the Chief Secretary for Ireland that a question affecting the Department of which he was the Chief Officer should be raised and disposed of in his absence, especially when it was a question of such vital importance to the people of Ireland generally. However, when they looked at the figures which had been quoted by the senior Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), they could not be expected to accept the arguments which had been put forward by earlier speakers. It had been said by one of the earlier speakers that the object of getting rid of the people of Ireland was to get rid of a troublesome and disloyal and discontented people. The hon. Member for Waterford had proved that the people who had gone from loyal Ulster were far greater in numbers than those from what was called discontented Connaught; so that, if Lord Spencer's object was to get rid of those who were troublesome, and if he was responsible for the whole tide of emigration, what he was doing was to deport the population of loyal Ulster to a greater extent than from the disloyal South. No good could be done by imputing motives of that character; but the fact that no less than 108,000 people had left Ireland last year was an appalling fact, and he must say it reflected great discredit on the statesmanship of this House, and would reflect lasting disgrace on those Irish Members who had been sent to this House if they could not devise some means of putting a stop to this system, and find some means of comfortable livelihood for the mass of people on the Irish shores. He quite agreed as to the economical disadvantages that Ireland must suffer through parting with so large a number of its population. As the hon. Member for Waterford had pointed out, no time would be lost to Public Business if this Vote were postponed and the other Votes proceeded with; but, at the same time, he must say that he did not think this question of emigration could be satisfactorily deal with in a discussion upon the Estimates. He was glad that every opportunity, be it great or small, which presented itself for raising this question was taken advantage of; but he must confess that he was not content to see it raised now piecemeal and fragmentarily. He should himself have put a Motion on the Paper dealing with this question, but that he expected that something of the kind would be done by hon. Gentlemen near him, who represented a large body of people in Ireland, and who could speak with an authority which he did not pretend to possess. In all sincerity he expressed his regret that no Resolution of that kind had been formulated; and he trusted that, whatever might be the result of this discussion, some Resolution of a practical kind in that direction would be submitted, and that the House would have a full and thorough discussion on the whole subject. He hoped the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to see his way to postpone the consideration of this Vote, and to proceed with the other Votes, which could be adequately and satisfactorily discussed, because the responsible Officers of other Departments were present to answer any questions put to them.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said he thought that the request which had been made for the postponement of the debate was only a reasonable one. As far as he was acquainted with the emigration from Ulster, it had not been an enforced emigration, but voluntary, except in one or two districts in Donegal. He strongly objected to anything like enforced emigration in Ireland; and he trusted that, as far as the Government were concerned, they would abandon anything in the nature of enforced emigration, whilst assisting such emigrants as were willing to go. Mr. Tuke might emigrate people if they were willing; but it would be better for the Government if they took no part in any emigration scheme whatever. By aiding in emigration schemes the Government were putting themselves in a position adverse to all public opinion in Ireland. He would recommend the Government to withdraw this Vote.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that in the absence of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, it was not desirable that the Committee should proceed with the Vote. He would, therefore, suggest that they should go on with the next Vote and proceed steadily with the remaining Estimates.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) withdraw his Amendment?

MR. O'BRIEN said, that if he understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to propose that the Irish portion of the Estimates should be passed over, he had no objection.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that was not what he had proposed to do. There were other portions of the Irish Estimates which might very well be discussed. All that he suggested was that they should go on to the next Vote in the absence of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary.

COLONEL NOLAN said the next Vote would be open to the same objection; but he saw through the glass-door that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was about to enter the House.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that as his right hon. Friend was now present, it would not be necessary to postpone the consideration of the Vote.

MR. SEXTON said, he was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman had returned to the House. His absence during the last hour or two had been the subject of some comment, because there was no one else who could supply the information which the Irish Members had asked for. He fully acknowledged the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury; but in questions of this kind courtesy was only one of the elements of debate, and they wanted something beyond, in the shape of a little knowledge of the facts. His hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had suggested that it would be more useful if this question of Irish emigration were raised in the form of a substantive Motion. It was intended originally to raise the question upon the Address, and the feeling of some of the Irish Members was that, if it were so raised, it might be possible to gain some of the Radical votes. In the end it was found that they were not likely to gain any Radical or English votes, and as they received no support, the proposal to raise the question on the Address was wisely abandoned. The hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) had suggested that it might have been possible to gain some Radical votes if the Amendment had been pressed.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he had not suggested anything of the kind.

Mr. SEXTON said, that if that were not so he failed to see what advantage would have been gained by moving the Amendment, or by continuing to discuss the question. The hon. Member for Mayo had also raised a point in reference to the relative emigration from Ulster and Connaught.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he had quoted his hon. Friend the Member for Waterford.

Mr. SEXTON said, that fact might perhaps induce him to receive the statement with more regard. The hon. Member had spoken of loyal Ulster and discontented Connaught, and he (Mr. Sexton) had not been able to find from the records that the emigration from Ulster differed in any respect from the emigration from Connaught. The hon. Gentleman appeared to feel himself justified in drawing the inference that the policy of emigration in destroying discontent had not succeeded. He would give the hon. Gentleman a plain unvarnished story. The emigration from Ulster, heavy as it was, was not appreciably greater than in the year before, and, as the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had pointed out, it was voluntary and not enforced. Nevertheless, it had not increased appreciably in the course of the year. But when they turned to Connaught, and examined the figures relating to emigration in connection with that Province, what did find? They found it had increased from 16,000 to 29,000. Emigration, therefore, had been greatly stimulated in that Province, and the hon. Gentleman's argument did not touch the facts, because the energy, skill, and tact of the Irish Office was being applied in getting rid of the disaffected in Ireland, and forcing them to accept emigration to Canada. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary tell the Committee why these emigrants from Ireland should always be forced to accept emigration to Canada? He (Mr. Sexton) thought that when Parliament voted the money, it was intended to be used for those who could not obtain a decent living in their own country, with the object of enabling them to obtain a decent living elsewhere. But why should they be compelled to emigrate to Canada? He noticed a remarkable fact in the statistics issued yesterday morning that, for every Englishman who emigrated from this country to Canada, four left the country to go to the United States. Then, if the United States offered, so much more than Canada, an opening which inspired an emigrant with energy and hope, and if Englishmen who desired to become the architects of their own fortunes, and to choose their own country, went to the United States, why did they compel the poor Irish emigrant, under their forced system of emigration, to settle in Canada? Was it because they cherished the delusive hope that he would still be kept within the pale of British influence? It would not be by any such puny and pitiable system that they would be able to overcome that gravitation of events by which he believed the American Republic was destined to absorb the British Possessions there. There were two things that told against the detestable system of emigration enforced in Ireland. No doubt they emigrated persons who were very poor; but they were bound to do something more than emigrate these poor people; they were bound, in morality and in statesmanship, to see that these people had some means of living in the future—that they should not throw them as waifs and strays on a foreign land, but give them some security that they would not be left helpless, as had been the case in too many instances, and that they should not be re-shipped and sent back again to the same workhouse from which they were originally sent out. There was a charge against the Government that they had abetted fraud by assisting in emigrating persons from the West of Ireland who were able to pay for the expense of emigrating themselves. He referred to the case of Belmullet. Out of 360 families which had been emigrated from the Belmullet Union, fully one-half were able to pay the cost of their own emigration. But not only had the money of the State been employed in emigrating these people, but they had been actually enabled to cheat, to rob, and to ruin the tradespeople of Belmullet by leaving the country and evading the payment of their just debts. In many instances the tradesmen had lost a further chance by the emigration of persons who had been security for others. The Chief Secretary had informed the House that the agents of Mr. Tuke considered that they were not agents for collecting debts; but ought they to avail themselves of a system by which the money provided by the State was made use of by persons to enable them fraudulently to evade the payment of their debts? Not only had many persons gone away with the money they ought to have paid to their creditors, but many of them had purchased articles to assist them in emigrating which they had never paid for. From every point of view this forced system of emigration in Ireland was greatly to be condemned; and whether he looked at that aspect of the exertions of the Tuke Committee, which emigrated, at the cost of the State, persons who were able to emigrate at their own cost, if they chose to do so, or at that other aspect, by which poor people, unable to live on this side of the Atlantic, were deposited on the other side in a hopeless state of destitution, he could not help regarding the system as detestable. The voice of every authority of any competence and knowledge was raised against it in Ireland. The Press, the clergy, the Representatives of the people all condemned it with one accord; and the Irish Members would certainly avail themselves of every occasion which offered facilities in that House to expose the evils of the system to the judgment of the House, and the condemnation of the Irish people.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he must apologize to the Committee for having been absent during part of the discussion; but he had not anticipated that this Vote would have come on at so early a period. If he had been present, however, the discussion might have been cut short at a comparatively early period; because, as a matter of fact, this Supplementary Vote for the Local Government Board in Ireland did not raise the question of emigration at all, as not one single halfpenny of the £2,700 required for the Vote had been spent upon emigration. The two temporary Inspectors, whose salaries were included in the Supplementary Estimates, were employed during exceptional distress in the West of Ireland. One of them was appointed for a district in Donegal, and another for a district in Clare, and they were not in any respect connected with emigration. They were appointed because the Local Government Board were informed that the bulk of the population in those districts was distressed. The other items, if the hon. Member would look at the Vote, would be found to have no reference whatever to emigration.

MR. O'BRIEN wished to point out that there were two sets of cases to which the Papers placed in the hands of Members applied.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he thought the hon. Member was mistaken. Both of the cases of the Inspectors were, as he had mentioned, cases of gentlemen employed entirely in the relief of distress. The whole Estimate for the expense attending emigration was paid out of the £100,000 voted in the Arrears Act of 1882. It was not for him to question the right of hon. Members to raise the subject of emigration upon the Supplementary Estimates; although it had nothing to do with them, notwithstanding the fact that the Supplementary Estimates were voted for the Department which was concerned in administering the State emigration of the country. With regard to the charges which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had brought forward against the Administration, he (Mr. Trevelyan) had, in reply to Questions put to him in the House, already stated that, in his belief, they were unfounded.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman had refused to answer the Question put to him in regard to Belmullet.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the charge of the hon. Member was that a large number of people were emigrated who were well able to support themselves, and to pay their own passage. His answer to that charge was that if they were able to support themselves they would not have wished to emigrate.

MR. SEXTON remarked, that they were, at any rate, able to pay the cost of their own passage.

MR. TREVELYAN said, his answer to that was that if they were able to pay the cost of their passage and desired to emigrate they would have emigrated long ago. People were actuated by ordinary human motives, and would not hesitate to spend money in order to place themselves in a position they desired to obtain. It was not likely, however, that a population, where the valuation only amounted to 17*s.* or 18*s.* per head, would be able to pay £6 or £7 for passage money to a foreign country. The hon. Member said that these people had been sent off in debt to many of the tradesmen who remained behind; but the hon. Member had not brought forward any evidence to show that such was the case. It was certainly true that these poor people were very often very deeply in debt to their tradesmen. Many of them were painfully ignorant and illiterate, and when one of them ran into debt with an influential tradesman in his vicinity, he rapidly found himself deeply in debt. He found himself altogether unable to check the accounts against him; and it was unfortunately true that many of these poor people held, in regard to the big tradesmen in the vicinity, very much the same position as that which was held in olden days by working men in regard to the truckshops. The question was, whether the members of Mr. Tuke's Committee, who superintended the system of emigration, were bound to refuse to emigrate any man who was supposed to be in debt to one of these tradesmen, the tradesman having already got out of him very much more than the worth of the goods he had provided? His own opinion was that Mr. Tuke's agents were not bound to refuse to emigrate these persons, so long as they did not emigrate them surreptitiously; and there was no proof that any of the gentlemen employed in emigration had used any surreptitious means to get out of the country any poor people who were really or nominally upon the tradesmen's books. The hon. Gentleman talked as if this system of emigration was very offensive to the Irish people. He was not going to argue whether the system was offensive to certain hon. Members who sat in that House. They were actuated by broad and strong considerations of public policy with which he did not quarrel. He understood their point of view; but in disposing of the sums of money which Parliament had placed at the disposal of the Local Government Board, he maintained that there were two classes of people to whom they had to look; one was the actual individuals they proposed to emigrate, and the other was the local authorities who were the representatives of the districts from which these people emigrated. Now, with regard to those two classes of people, it was idle to say that emigration was unpopular. The people were not forced abroad. There was no process by which they could be forced to emigrate. [An hon. MEMBER: The pinch of hunger.] He had expected some such answer as that, because he understood the line of reasoning which was running in the minds of hon. Members opposite. He had expected some such answer, but not exactly the one which had been given. He had expected hon. Members to say that these poor people emigrated abroad under pressure from the landlords, and perhaps what the hon. Member called "the pinch of hunger," or whatever else it might be—that was to say, under the pressure of distress, under the conditions of the Poor Law as at present administered, or where they took the question of rents with the contingency of eviction. Now, both of those conditions had existed for many years before this; and, therefore, it was not that state of things which drove the people abroad, because, if it had been so, as it had existed for many years, the people might have gone abroad at any moment. It was only within the last 18 months, however, that an opportunity had been given to the people of withdrawing themselves from the influences, which hon. Members opposite deprecated, by means of emigration; no compulsory power had been applied in order to drive them from the country; but he allowed that a method had been given to them of escaping from that which hon. Gentlemen seemed to regard as a state of terror. So much in regard to the people themselves; but now in regard to those who represented these people—that was to say, the Boards of Guardians. In dispensing the money which had been placed at their disposal by Parliament, the Local Government Board were at first determined not to place themselves in the condition of receiving a rebuff from any Board; and, therefore, they had only communicated with those Boards of Guardians who showed a very decided willingness to accept the grant for emigration. It so happened that there were 10 Unions which appeared to the Local Government Board to be sufficiently depressed to justify them in allotting a portion of the grant to them, and all of these 10 Unions represented Boards of Guardians who were glad, and very glad, to receive a portion of the grant. There was no unwillingness whatever among these bodies, which were distinctly representative. He quite allowed that, of course, there were *ex officio* Guardians upon these Boards; but the *ex officio* Guardians did not sit in anything like a proportion, in these distressed districts, to that which was the case in more prosperous districts in the North and East of Ireland. There was nothing whatever to induce the Local Government Board to believe that either the representative or the *ex officio* Guardians were in any way averse to sharing in the advantages, as he ventured to call them, of the money placed at their disposal by Parliament. In regard to those districts Mr. Tuke's operations were carried out; but the money was provided either by the Exchequer, or by Mr. Tuke's Committee, only in cases where there was no unwillingness, as far as could be ascertained, on the part of any representative body, to accept the proffered assistance. There was one Union which originally showed unwillingness to accept assistance from Mr. Tuke's Committee—namely, the Union of Swinford. That Union was approached carefully, because the Local Government Board were very anxious not to raise any controversy; and he would read to the House a Minute, dated January 22 of this year, which emanated from the Guardians of the Swinford Union—

> "With reference to the letter from the Local Government Board, dated January 25, it was resolved that as to the expense of emigration of suitable persons from the Swinford Union to be selected and confided to Mr. Tuke's Committee, proper precautions should be taken that no expense whatever in connection with emigration was to be borne by the rates, the proposal should be accepted."

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee what happened at the next subsequent meeting of the Swinford Board?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he did not know; but the hon. Gentleman would be able to tell the Committee himself, seeing that he could speak as often as he liked when the House was in Committee. He would only remind the hon. Member that the Minute he had read was a Minute which emanated from a hostile Board; but they accepted the assistance of the Government on the condition that no expense should fall on the Board, and that care should be taken to select the right sort of emigrants. He had made these remarks about emigration because it was a subject which interested hon. Members who had taken part in the discussion; but he was bound to call the attention of the Committee again to the fact that the Supplementary Estimate they were discussing did not in any way raise the question of emigration. Indeed, it was absolutely impossible that it could raise the question of emigration, because the entire expenses of emigration were paid out of a single Vote, the first two-thirds of which were provided for in the Arrears Act, and the remainder in an Act entitled the Tramways Act. The only item in the Vote which applied to recent legislation was the item of £370 for expenses under the Labourers' Act in Ireland. It had been the duty of the Local Government Board to carry out to the best of its abilities not only the Tramways Act and the Labourers' Act, but every other Act which had been passed by Parliament for the benefit of the people of Ireland. He trusted that, having listened to the remarks he had made, hon. Members would allow the Vote to be taken.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had cited Swinford Union in support of his contention that the emigration policy of the Government was popular with the Poor Law Guardians in the West of Ireland. He would point out, however, that the resolution of the Swinford Board of Guardians was passed at a meeting of the Board attended by only six or seven Guardians, and that on the next day the Board saw the fallacy of its conduct, and made the resolution the subject of indignant language, and the Chairman himself apologized for it, saying that he was not in favour of the emigration scheme.

MR. BLAKE said, he agreed with what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), The hon. Member drew a very sad and dreadful picture of the condition in which a good many emigrants from Ireland found themselves on arriving at the other side of the Atlantic; and he charged it on the Government that if they did send the people out of the country they ought, at least, to place them in such a position as would enable them to avoid sinking into the miserable state which he described. Now, he thought his hon. Friend knew very well that, in spite of everything which he could do or say—and he believed that the hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were prompted by the very best motives, and so far he agreed with them—a certain amount of emigration must go on. There were two points on which he differed from the hon. Gentleman and his Friends on this important question. He believed his hon. Friend would agree with him that there always would be a certain number of persons induced by love of adventure, fondness of change, or the desire of seeing their friends, to leave Ireland; and he was sure that all hon. Gentlemen on those Benches would desire that the condition of those persons, on their arrival in America or Canada, should be as satisfactory as possible. That being so, the question was to consider the best means by which this could be insured. It would be in the recollection of the Committee—for he had brought it before the House very pointedly on two or three occasions—that the Marquess of Lorne, when Governor General of Canada, at the instance of the Dominion Government, sent a despatch to the Prime Minister in this country pointing out the generous desire which the people of Canada had for the amelioration of the condition of the poorer class of the Irish people at the time when great distress existed in Ireland; and he said that the Government of Canada were willing to grant 160 acres of land to selected persons, provided that the Imperial Government would contribute sufficient money in each case to enable those persons to purchase a milch cow, a horse, and what else was absolutely necessary to enable them to subsist on the land at first. He had brought this subject under the attention of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his Colleagues; and he was bound to say that, with hardly an exception, they had stated their willingness that emigration should be carried on, to a certain extent, under such circumstances as he had described. But the Government, unfortunately, had turned a deaf ear to the proposal. He had entreated the Government to consider favourably the generous message sent from Canada on behalf of the people of Ireland, but without success. Then, again, during the last 12 months, the Chairman of the Pacific Railway Company made a proposal to the Home Government that if £1,000,000 was given to the Pacific Railway Company in seven years, for which they would give ample security, they would be willing to take out a certain number of Irish families, put them in a most favourable position in Canada, give them 160 acres of land, and do everything that was stipulated in the despatch of the Governor General. This proposal also fell through, owing to the conditions imposed by the Imperial Government, one of which was that the Dominion Government should join in the security to be given to the Pacific Railway Company. Thinking that it was desirable that the people who emigrated should do so under proper guidance, he had several interviews with the Agent General of Canada, with the view of making an arrangement with him; but the Imperial Government insisted on a most needless proviso, and refused to assent. It would have been better to leave this matter in the hands of the Pacific Railway Company, because, as the Company was to be paid £1,000,000 in seven years, it was necessary that the people who emigrated should be put into such a position in Canada that they would be enabled to keep up the instalments. What had become of that proposal of the Pacific Railway Company? It was one of the most advantageous that could be made in behalf of the persons it was desired to benefit, and if it could be carried into effect he believed the Imperial Government would not have lost one shilling by its adoption; and he was disposed to think that his hon. Friends behind him, and the people of Ireland themselves, if they had seen that their fellow-countrymen were being placed in the position proposed by the Pacific Railway Company, would willingly have assented to it. He had been in the United States, and he could imagine nothing more wretched than the position of persons landed in New York with only £1 in their pockets. It was true that Her Majesty's Government had said they would give £2 to each emigrant; but that was still a ridiculous sum, and upon such conditions he should himself be glad to keep as many people at home as possible. There were, as he believed his hon. Friends would admit, a certain number of people in Sligo, Cork, and elsewhere in Ireland, whose position would be considerably improved by their going away on proper conditions, and it would be better for themselves and the country that they should do so. But he joined his hon. Friends on those Benches in offering every possible opposition to any further emigration, unless it were conducted on such principles as would insure to the people landed in the United States or Canada their being placed in such a position on arrival as would enable them to get a comfortable living; and, therefore, he applauded the attitude which his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo had taken up towards the existing system.

MR. BARRY said, he had been surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland defending the course of action pursued by the Local Government Board, and by the Boards of Guardians in Ireland last summer; and he was also surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman denying that there had been any such thing going on as compulsory and surreptitious emigration from Ireland. Surely the right hon. Gentleman must have forgotten the great amount of evidence that had been collected last autumn as to the compulsory emigration that was taking place. He (Mr. Barry) had been in New York last summer, and saw some of the emigrants landing from the steamers, and anything more pitiful than the condition of those people he had never seen. The United States Commissioners had taken very practical steps to demonstrate the truth in this matter, and he held in his hand an affidavit which showed the condition of the people and the circumstances under which they were sent away. The affidavit was as follows:—

"STATE OF NEW YORK.

"Offices of the
"Commissioners of Emigration,
"Castle Garden, N.Y.

"Nano Sullivan, being duly sworn, deposes and says: That she is a native of Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry, Ireland, and arrived at the port of New York, June 24th, 1883, per S.S. *Furnessia*, from Liverpool, *viâ* Valencia, Ireland. That she has her illegitimate child with her, aged 3 years. That she has been an inmate of the workhouse in Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry, Ireland, for the last three years. That she did not want to come to America, and on her so stating was told by Mr. O'Neill, one of the Guardians of said workhouse, that if she did not she would be put out of the institution. That she wanted to have her child with her married sister, who was willing to care for it; but was not allowed to do so. That herself and child's passage was paid for by Mr. W. O. Driscoll, Clerk to the Union, who also gave her money order for £1, on Henderson Brothers, No. 7, Bowling Green, New York City, agents of above vessel. That she had no relations or friends in America, and that she wanted to be sent back to Ireland."

He would not trouble the Committee by the whole series of affidavits in his possession, but would remark that they were all of a similar character. Some of the scenes he had himself witnessed in New York were of the most heartrending description. One man, whom he saw land with six children around him, said that he had protested earnestly against being sent out of the country; but he was told that unless he made up his mind to leave in two days he and his family would have to go out of the workhouse; he protested that his wife was ill and about to be confined. The child died on the voyage, and he (Mr. Barry) saw the poor woman a raving lunatic held down by two or three officials in Castle Garden, New York; the man insisting upon being sent back to Ireland because he had no relatives or friends in America. He (Mr. Barry) asked, how, in the face of unimpeachable evidence of this kind, could the right hon. Gentleman get up and gravely assure the Committee that there was with regard to the poorer people of Ireland no such thing as compulsory emigration? It existed beyond all doubt, and its odious character, and the odious conditions which surrounded it, made it detestable in the eyes of the people of Ireland and their Representatives. The right hon. Gentleman had made in his speech a sweeping charge against the small shopkeepers in Ireland, describing them as tyrants over the people; but, surely, the right hon. Gentleman's historical recollection of Irish matters was somewhat limited, because he would otherwise have remembered that, whilst Irish Members in that House in 1879 were striving by every means in their power to direct the attention of the Government to the approaching famine, the shopkeepers were the people who, at a great sacrifice of their own interest, gave the poorer classes unlimited credit. He was, and should always be, opposed to the truck system, either in this country or in Ireland; but for the right hon. Gentleman to insinuate that the assistance given by the shopkeepers in Ireland during the famine partook of the character of that odious system, to say the least of it, very much surprised him.

Mr. A. PEASE said, that the remarks of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) appeared to be based upon incorrect information. It must be obvious to everyone that Mr. Tuke's Committee, of which he was a Member, were not open to the charge of having used their powers, as had been stated, to encourage landlords to evict their tenants, or to do anything that could be described in that way. The hon. Gentleman said he had the authority of Catholic priests for the statement; but he (Mr. Pease) was bound to say that the Committee had the assistance of Catholic priests in the districts in which their work was carried on, who gave information as to the families living in the localities. They had, moreover, the assistance of the Relieving Officers of the districts, who were certainly most likely to know the circumstances of the families, because it was to them that they made applications for relief. Under the circumstances, he did not see what more could have been done, and he doubted very much the accuracy of the statement of the hon. Member when he said those persons were in possession of considerable means. Then with regard to what had been said about the shopkeepers. The Committee knew that many persons were in debt to this class, but they had no money wherewith to pay; and it could not, therefore, be any disadvantage to the localities that they should leave because there was no prospect of their paying the shopkeepers unless they starved in the attempt. He would point out that after the emigrants had settled in Canada they had sent back no less a sum than £10,000 to the district to pay the shopkeepers, to assist their friends to pay under the Arrears Act, and also to enable friends to join them in more happy circumstances in America. Then with regard to the statement that people were being thrown helplessly on the shore of America. Mr. Tuke's Committee made arrangements in Canada of such a kind that there was not a single family landed there without employment, or which was not placed with relatives who had written letters promising to give them either assistance or employment on arrival. Therefore, he thought the observations of the hon. Member were based upon incorrect information. There seemed to have been some want of discretion, or, perhaps, of humanity, on the part of some Boards of Guardians in Ireland; but for that Mr. Tuke's Committee was not responsible. In conclusion, he was in a position to state that not one emigrant sent out by that Committee had been refused by the American Government.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he regretted the sweeping accusation that had been made against the shopkeepers in the West of Ireland, because everyone having experience of them must know that many of this class acted not only with very great forbearance, but with charity towards their distressed neighbours.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, he did not know whether the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had succeeded in convincing the Committee that there was no direct connection between the Vote under consideration and the question of emigration; but he thought the right hon. Gentleman might be assured that on every opportunity of the kind hon. Members on those Benches would protest against the miserable policy, of which he was the arch-apostle in Ireland. The Committee had had proof that evening that, so far from having altered his opinion, he had the deliberate intention of pursuing that policy to the furthest extent, and of aggravating the feelings of the Representatives of the people of Ireland. The arguments employed by the right hon. Gentleman were singular indeed. He took the Poor Law Boards as those whom he regarded as the representatives of the poorer people of Ireland, and whose co-operation he considered necessary in carrying out this policy. Everyone knew that the Boards of Guardians had a direct interest in sending poor people from Ireland, and if the right hon. Gentleman had not made himself acquainted with that fact, it was but another instance of his ignorance of Irish affairs. The right hon. Gentleman said that in many instances the Boards of Guardians were quite willing to avail themselves of the assistance of the emigration scheme; but he did not say that the alternative giving employment to the people in their districts was offered, or that the Guardians must either support the people out of their slender rates, or submit to his "pinch of hunger" policy. With regard to the local traders in the West of Ireland, he thought there was no expression in the right hon. Gentleman's speech which more completely demonstrated his ignorance of Irish affairs and the relations between classes in Ireland than the statement he had made with reference to the local traders, which he (Mr. Harrington) could only account for by the fact that his knowledge of Irish matters was simply *nil.* But everyone acquainted with the West of Ireland knew that the small traders had, during the past five years, liberally contributed both in goods and money out of pocket to enable the unfortunate tenant farmers to pay rack-rents to the Irish landlords, and that the debts due to them and the money so advanced had led them to ruin and bankruptcy. The right hon. Gentleman said that there had been no compulsory emigration from Ireland; but did he forget that he had refused Irish Members the opportunity of arriving at the truth when challenged in that House for inquiry into the matter? The right hon. Gentleman had at all times refused such inquiries, and then he said the Irish Members were not able to give him proof of the maladministration with which this system had been conducted. He thought, however, his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry) had given proof that the people who had left Ireland had been forced out of the country by the Boards of Guardians, owing to the interest which those Boards had in reducing their rates. Did the right hon. Gentleman forget, when he relied on the information of the Boards of Guardians, that those Boards were the recruiting sergeants, so to speak, to pick up emigrants in the poorer districts of Ireland? The hon. Member opposite said that the Committee went into the cities and towns and tempted as many idle men as they could get hold of to emigrate. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman thought he was arriving at the solution of the Irish difficulty by that policy; but he could tell him that, so far from conciliating the people by this means, he was only raising up bitter feelings amongst them, and raising up greater difficulties for those who would have to succeed him in his Office. He could assure the Committee that so long as hon. Members on those Benches represented Irish constituencies they would protest against the miserable policy which was being pursued, and of which the right hon. Gentleman was champion—namely, that of thinning the population of the country. If it was true that 21 out of every 1,000 of the people had been emigrated during the past year, and that, whilst that emigration was going on, the area of cultivation was diminishing, it was the duty of the Irish Members to protest. He was assured as an undoubted fact that land was going of cultivation, and that the young and able-bodied who were capable of working were being driven into a foreign land. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had mentioned a significant fact—namely, that while all the voluntary emigrants went to the United States to seek a living, the unfortunate people who were transported by the Government and Mr. Tuke's Committee were sent to Canada; and they had clear and undoubted proof from the newspaper reports that the condition of these people, when they landed in Canada, was a scandal to the country which sent them out.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he was sure it was not the fact that the people who had emigrated had left the shopkeepers of their native places in debt. In almost all cases the people had sold all they had to be able to pay the shopkeepers before emigrating. He must repudiate what the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said against the shopkeepers. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman would qualify what he had said. Some of them made money—here and there one or two in a town—but, as a rule, they had had to struggle very hard for a living, and had been very little helped by the country. The great bulk of them very much preferred the ready-money system, and gave as little credit as they could. In the very hard times, no doubt, they had been obliged to adopt the system which had been referred to. They did not like to lose their money any more than any other class, and he was very sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had thought it right to make a complaint against them as a body. The commercial condition and the commercial wealth of Ireland was by no means what it ought to be; but he trusted it would improve. As to emigration, he looked upon it as the fault of the policy of the Government that so many people were leaving Ireland. He did not complain so much of what they had done in the matter of emigration as of what they had left undone in other respects. If they would take measures to give employment to the poor, they would not be so much to blame; but they did not—they had given this money for emigration, and had done little or nothing else. Whatever good emigration might have been able to do in years gone by, it had now spent its force. All the good that could be done had been done; and if the system were extended in the future, the result, he was sure, would be nothing but unmixed evil—they would not do as much good as they had been doing, and would produce still more evil.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, it seemed to him the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was tantamount to declaring that all the people who had been sent away were delighted to go, and that all who remained behind were delighted that they should be sent. He (Mr. O'Brien) was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not availed himself of a couple of opportunities which had presented themselves of testing the opinion of the country on this matter recently—he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not sent down a "pinch of hunger" candidate to a constituency in order to try the popularity of that policy. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that his case for emigration was complete, because 10 Boards of Guardians in the poorest districts in the West of Ireland had more or less countenanced it. The fact was, however, that in only two—he himself believed in only one—of these Boards of Guardians had the representative members a majority. This single Board was the Westport Board, and that, within the last three months, had passed a resolution distinctly refusing to spend a shilling of the rates in helping the transportation of the people. The rest of the Guardians *ex officio* were "rings" of landlords, who had a direct interest in getting what one of them, with good taste and humanity, recently described as "pauper warrants" from the Government. These men would be more than human if they resisted the seductions which were thrown in their way by the combined philanthropy of Mr. Tuke's Committee and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. They had been promised that the whole of the workhouses should be cleared of paupers; and he verily believed that if the United States Government had not sent back with ignominy the poor people home Her Majesty's Government had allowed to be deported, the more helpless pauperism of Ireland would have been flung on the coasts of America. The Guardians, of course, jumped at the offer. He might point out that in the few cases in which the United States Government had inquired into the condition of the people upon landing, they had found, what was perfectly notorious—namely, that these unfortunate people, many of them not even speaking English, used to a most primitive kind of life, and as much strangers to that new country as Red Indians would be to the Western world, had been thrown upon their shores with sums of £1 or £2 at the outside in their pockets to begin life with anew. This was the ground on which he had originally called this Vote in question to-night. He had pointed out that there was an increase of over 10,000 emigrants from the Province of Connaught last year over the year before, and it was certain that that was almost entirely caused by the assisted emigration of the Government. What he wanted to know was whether the Government had any authentic information to give the Committee as to the fate of these 10,000 people. They had heard what had happened to the wretched creatures that the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry) had seen at Castle Garden; they had heard of emigrants being sent back to their prisons—the Irish workhouses; and they had heard the story of the miserable emigrants wandering about the Canadian towns without a prospect of work; whilst on the other side they had the testimonials referred to by the hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. Pease). He need not say that there never had been a philanthropic enterprize, liberally supported, whose agents were not able to produce plenty of testimony to prove that white was black, or black was white, just as was desired. Quack doctors had never been in want of very eloquent and forcible words in which to recommend their medicines. These English philanthropists went over to these wretched districts, just as another race of philanthropists in the last generation had gone over to convert the benighted Papists. Most pathetic stories used to be sent over to England as to the progress of the work of enlightening the unfortunate Irish, and the letters in which these stories used to be told used to be quoted at all the Exeter Hall meetings amidst the most earnest applause. He must say he had not heard more self-congratulatory testimony, even in the printed Report of Mr. Tuke's Committee, than he had heard a thousand times over in the Reports of the Missionary Societies in the West of Ireland, relating to districts with which he was familiar, and in which he knew that the success of those Societies had been absolutely *nil.* He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give them some sort of information as to what had really become of these 10,000 people. Where were they ? He charged the Government with the transportation, under false pretences, of these people. What had become of them ? All he could say was that if that House would not see, by argument, the madness of the policy of Irish emigration, these Irish emigrants, whom they were sending away, would yet teach them that madness.

MR. BIGGAR said, the Committee had not gained much enlightenment from the arrival of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan), and from the statement of the hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. Pease). Some scraps of information, however, had been gleaned from these Gentlemen. The Committee found that the Chief Secretary, the hon. Member for Whitby, and Mr. Tuke's Committee belonged to what they might call the "Long Firm." In the first place, the Chief Secretary refused to allow the Poor Law Guardians to give outdoor relief to the poor families in districts impoverished by famine; then he sent out a pamphlet to the Relieving Officers asking them to tout for emigrants for Mr. Tuke's Committee; then Mr. Tuke's Committee came and said the people would be delighted to emigrate—because the Chief Secretary had told them some of them would like to go abroad—and the ratepayers in the districts in which these poor people resided had been impoverished by the existing system of charging blood money, and by the extra police tax, and did not know what to do. The Guardians could not get the people to pay their rates, impoverished as they were; and they were, therefore, glad to resort to any means they could to lower the rates. The result was the emigration of poor families—that was the way the system of emigration was carried out, by false pretences and fraud amongst these members of the long firm. He really thought the Chief Secretary should get up and make a clean breast of it, telling them the whole facts from top to bottom. The right hon. Gentleman ought to tell them that the whole system was one of which he was heartily ashamed. First of all, the right hon. Gentleman refused to allow the Guardians to assist the people, then he sent the people out to Canada, where the climate was such that it was not possible for more than a small proportion of the poor creatures to live, and then he lent his countenance to the reports which had been referred to. The right hon. Gentleman maintained that the Poor Law Guardians, who were at their wits' ends to support the paupers in their districts, were—especially, no doubt, *ex officio* members, who wished to lessen the rates for themselves—better authorities than the Catholic Bishops and clergy who had raised their voices in the matter, and had all protested in the most vehement terms against this system of forcible emigration. The Government, who thought they were doing a grand thing in emigrating the Irish peasantry, were not adding much to their popularity, or to the probability of their getting the support of the Irish Party. The Irish Party had voted against the Government on their Egyptian policy, and why did they do so? Simply because of the government of Ireland by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. If it had not been for that, he certainly did not think the Irish Party would have voted against the Government. In all probability they would have voted with them. The right hon. Gentleman had the result of mis-government in Ireland before his eyes—he knew what had been the effect of mis-government under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford

(Mr. W. E. Forster); and could he not imagine that the fate of the right hon. Gentleman might also be his own? Could he not imagine that he might also be thrown over by a Government which found that it did not pay to retain such officers?

Mr. LEAMY wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had heard to-night for the first time the affidavit which had been read over by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry)? It was possible that the Irish Executive had not taken the trouble to ascertain on what ground the people who had been sent back from America had been returned. If he had not heard the affidavit and the facts stated by the hon. Member for Wexford for the first time, how could he explain his statement that there was no forced emigration from Ireland?

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he supposed, from the course Her Majesty's Government were taking, they were anxious to increase the sale of *The Irish World;* otherwise, what object could they have in sending out to America, to make desperate characters of them, people who, if allowed to remain at home, would continue quiet and peaceable citizens? He understood the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to lay down the maxim that, for such a good purpose as emigration, people had a right to run away and defraud their creditors. ["No, no!"] Yes; he understood the Chief Secretary to defend the practice of so defrauding creditors, and to admit that there were a number of traders in Ireland whose debtors Her Majesty's Government had helped to run away out of the country. He understood that after all the denunciations of the immorality of the "no rent" policy they had heard coming from the Ministerial Benches "no rent" of an aggravated form was now a part of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland as well as in Khartoum. The present Cabinet might be described as a Cabinet of Repudiation—repudiation always, of course, for an object, for Her Majesty's Government had accepted the maxim that "the end justifies the means." However, this was no jesting matter. The Government was still keeping up the policy of emigration, instead of adopting one of beneficial legislation. The glittering promises of the Government about allowing a larger share of electoral power to the Irish people sounded rather strangely in view of this policy—carried on simultaneously—of removing from the country the people who would be capable of exercising the electoral power. He certainly agreed with the criticisms passed on Lord Spencer and on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; however, he could not but regard those Members of the Government as the hands rather than the heads; and it was on Her Majesty's Government in general, and their English supporters in particular, which rested the responsibility for this policy of extermination. He did not know how far Her Majesty's Government thought they were entitled to trifle with the sensitiveness or the indignation of the Irish race; but, most assuredly, at the present moment, when so many dangers surrounded this Empire, it was, to his mind, a foolish policy, even from the point of view of English common sense, to continue irritating and exasperating the Irish race, which was so widely spread and capable of exercising influence in so many directions. On the Irish Benches hon. Members could do no more than utter verbal protests; and in the Lobby they could do no more than register votes against Her Majesty's Government; but, for every Irishman emigrated by the policy of Her Majesty's Government from Ireland, when a wise policy would have firmly planted that man and his family in his own land, he did not shrink from taking the responsibility of wishing that a corresponding evil might fall on the Government of this Empire.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 19; Noes 92: Majority 73.—(Div. List, No. 24.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. BIGGAR wished to ask the Chief Secretary a question with regard to the Vote. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that an extra Inspector had been sent down to County Donegal and County Clare. Was this person Mr. Macfarlane, who had been guilty of the misconduct of travelling with an expired ticket? In the next place, he should like to have some explanation with regard to Sub-head E and Sub-head I. He should like some explanation as to the increase in the Vote, for under Sub-head I there was no explanation whatever. These two sub-heads represented the salaries of medical men in Ireland, and with a decreasing population in that country, he should like to know on what ground increased salaries were given to those medical men? In Dublin there was a society, headed by Doctor Jacob, which constantly made representations to the Local Government Board with a view to robbing the ratepayers; and he wished to know whether this Doctor Jacob and his confederates were going to get leave to plunder the ratepayers of England and Wales as well as of Ireland? These persons were particularly industrious in their mode of action in these interests. They were constantly seen in deputations. They were seen in the Lobby of the House at different times; and he should like to know whether the Chief Secretary could give any explanation respecting this increase of the salaries of the medical officers in Ireland?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked, what was the meaning of a comparative sliding decrease?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that, with regard to the Inspectors, Mr. Macfarlane was the permanent Inspector for Donegal; but he would not enter into any personal question with regard to that officer, because it was not his salary that was being questioned, but the salaries of temporary Inspectors. A variation of a few hundreds in the course of a year in the salaries of medical officers, which amounted to something like £74,000 a-year, was not a very great variation. He thought that was about as much explanation as he could be expected to give, and he could not go into a discussion of the details of this large sum.

MR. BIGGAR said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman's explanation satisfactory. It was, in fact, no explanation at all; and he should move to reduce the Vote.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he remembered having a good deal to do with this question of medical officers in Ireland when he was Chief Secretary, and he found that there was always that difficulty to which the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had referred—namely, the contest between the medical officers on the one hand, and the Board of Guardians on the other; the officers, of course, being desirous to have larger salaries, to which in many cases they were entitled, and the Guardians being anxious to reduce the salaries. But he also remembered that under the Public Health Act, by arrangement with the Treasury, there was a certain scale of salaries fixed which was to be enforced throughout Ireland. He believed that if that scale had been adhered to, such a fluctuation as appeared in this Vote would have been impossible. He hoped the Committee would receive from the Chief Secretary some explanation as to whether that scale had been adhered to, or whether there had been some alterations which had caused this increase. If so, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would explain what the alteration had been.

MR. O'BRIEN asked under what head the salary of Dr. Wodehouse appeared?

MR. TREVELYAN replied, that the salary of Dr. Wodehouse was under Sub-head C.

MR. O'BRIEN said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned Dr. Wodehouse's name, because he should be under the necessity of moving that that officer's salary be reduced by £247. Mr. Macfarlane was an Inspector who had rendered himself exceedingly unpopular in Ireland; but Dr. Wodehouse had rendered himself still more obnoxious by his conduct in Donegal last year. He believed Dr. Wodehouse was entirely responsible for the misconduct of the landlord Board of Guardians in Donegal last summer, in refusing to minimize the distress, and in misleading the House. He did not think the Irish Members ought to let any portion of Dr. Wodehouse's salary pass without a protest against his persistent attempts to deny, what to all the rest of the world was only too evident—namely, that thousands of people were left for months dependent on the very precarious chances of charity. He not only tried to deny that distress existed, but he did all that he possibly could to dissuade the English people from contributing to charitable funds. For these reasons he should move that Dr. Wodehouse's salary be reduced by £247.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,486, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of

March 1884, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board for Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation."—(*Mr. O'Brien.*)

MR. TREVELYAN said, in reply to the right hon. Member (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), that the amount of money asked for under Sub-head H was easily explained by the cost of medicines, which had increased by 7 per cent. The next Sub-head—I—dealt with the salaries of officers under the Public Health Act for the year ending September 29, 1882, the officers not having sent in their accounts earlier. With regard to Dr. Wodehouse, he could make no answer that would satisfy the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). He was appointed by the Irish Government to carry out a policy which was frequently discussed in that House, very warmly and energetically, by the hon. Member and some other Members, but which met with the approval of the great majority. In carrying that policy through, Dr. Wodehouse had proved himself very faithful to his duties; and although the hon. Member might justly challenge his salary in condemnation of the policy of the Government, the Government must defend his salary as a protest in favour of their policy and of Dr. Wodehouse; he having carried out that policy energetically and loyally.

MR. O'DONNELL said, the exposition the Committee had just heard of the Irish policy of the Government last year was very extraordinary. The conduct of Dr. Wodehouse was defended on the ground that he had behaved contrary to the local wants, and contrary to the wishes of those who were the Representatives of the people; and contrary to the cry of distress which rang on every side, and contrary to the protestations of every English visitor to Donegal. What was the defence made by the Chief Secretary? It was that, whatever Dr. Wodehouse's offence might have been, he was carrying out the policy which the Chief Secretary, from his lofty position of official and centralized Government, imposed on the local officials; and then, in defence of that policy, the Committee were told that it had obtained the approbation of the majority of the Members of that House. The Chief Secretary's contention, that that policy with regard to the county of Donegal, or any other Irish county, had obtained the approbation of a majority of Members, was just worth as much, from every Irish and every common-sense point of view, as if he had stated that the policy Dr. Wodehouse had been ordered to execute had been approved by a majority of the inhabitants of the Chinese Empire. What did the majority of Members know about the state of Donegal? What did the Chief Secretary, when he was going over Donegal in a closed carriage, and with a luncheon basket, know about the condition of the county? When he was waited upon by the priests and curates, he saw—and admitted in that House that he saw—the starvation, and he said that the only result of that view was to convince him that the time had come to give the screw of misery just an additional turn. To make hunger a little more pinching was to give the population no alternative but the workhouse or emigration. But to come back to the original question. If a local official in England acted contrary to the wishes of the locality and to the wishes of all who had a right to speak, would any English Member defend that official on the ground that he had satisfied a majority of Members of that House? English Members would say that it was his duty to see that he satisfied the wishes of the locality, and not to attempt to defend him because a majority of Members were satisfied. If any English Member offered such a defence as that he would be scouted out of the House; but if in an Irish county, in a time of starvation, an official of the English Government went directly against the interests to which he was appointed to minister, the defence was that he had carried out the duty imposed upon him. The whole theory of centralized government was reduced to an absurdity by such a defence. It was no use to point out to the House that an official was negligent and hard-hearted, for the Chief Secretary replied that it was his duty to be negligent and it was his duty to be hard-hearted. The complaint against Dr. Wodehouse was that he had neglected his business and derided the wants of the locality, although his salary had to be paid by Irish ratepayers and other contributors. He had gone against every representation made to him in Donegal by such men as Father M'Fadden, of Gweedore, and well known to be a centre of distress; and the only satisfaction that Irish Members got was, that he was appointed, not to carry out the needs of the locality, but a policy settled by the Government of this country and approved by a majority of the House. That policy of justification, set forth as the theory of Irish administration in such a cold-blooded and cold-hearted way by the exponent of the Government, would produce sentiments of revolt and rebellion in any Assembly less civilized than the Assembly which he had now the honour to address. It seemed to him that there were certain forms and topics of civilization which dulled modern sensibilities; and, judging from the manner in which the Government were supported in matters of this kind, he should say that the civilization of their supporters must have reached a very high point indeed.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. RAIKES said, he wished to ask a question with regard to the form of this Vote, as it seemed to him to be rather a dangerous form. Under Sub-head E, it was stated that £640 were for inquiries under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883, at the rate of £32 per inquiry — £20 for advertising and £12 for shorthand writing—less £243, anticipated saving on the ordinary expenses. He should be glad if the Chief Secretary, having given so much explanation, would go a step further, and explain what were the ordinary expenses on which the saving was anticipated, because, in point of fact, the House was unable to know whether it was required to sanction £643 or £397. He thought there should be some means by which the House could tell where the saving was to come from. Did the right hon. Gentleman expect to recover £243 under this particular sub-head?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he had intended to draw attention to the same subject, and to show that there ran through the whole Estimates the same objection he had already pointed out. He thought some explanation was required, and that Supplementary Estimates should not be proposed except in a form which would show Parliament exactly what was to be done.

MR. WARTON said, it seemed to him that the way in which this Vote was presented was very improper. The Government had made a miscalculation as to the amount they required for the Public Service; but they ought to be able to give some more distinct idea of what would be needed. It was a little too bad that after the miscalculation last year there should be a miscalculation now. Why were the Treasury speculating upon the possibility of having this saving of £243? Were they quite sure there was no other expense incurred in connection with the emergencies than £20 for advertisements and £12 for shorthand writing? How did the Committee know that the persons charged with the inquiry had not had to call someone before them? Were the Committee to expect that the poor labourers of Ireland were to be brought before the inquirers, and that they were to be told—"There is nothing for you; we can't give you anything; all that we are allowed is £32—£20 for advertisements, and £12 for a shorthand writer?" It seemed to him that, instead of looking forward to a reduction, they might very properly expect an expenditure greater than the Estimate.

MR. COURTNEY said, this item "E" had been explained several times, and he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), possessing the experience he did of the Estimates, should have made the criticisms he had just addressed to the Committee. Under Sub-head "E," £640 was asked for certain expenses which could not have been foreseen at the time the original Estimates were before the House. Indeed, the emergencies in respect of which the expenses had been incurred arose under an Act which was passed long after the original Estimates were submitted to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth) complained that they were now seeking to put Supplementary Estimates before the Committee for expenses which ought to have been foreseen. [Mr SCLATER-BOOTH: No.] Was it the form in which the Estimate was presented, or the fact of its being presented, that the right hon. Gentleman objected to? [Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: The form.] Well, the form appeared to him (Mr. Courtney) to give most ample and complete information as to the character of the expenses incurred. If the additional expenses had not increased the expenditure under the Vote beyond the original sum granted, there would have been no need to come to Parliament with a Supplementary Estimate. The Treasury had put before the Committee the exact additional expenditure which was anticipated under each sub-head, the saving expected, leaving the balance to be provided for. There happened to be a Sub-head "F," under which there was a saving anticipated, and they deducted £300 in respect of that sub-head. In fact, they put the Committee in the most absolute command of the facts of the case. Full information was given. Indeed, no better information could possibly be given than what appeared in the Estimate.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that, perhaps, he did not explain his meaning sufficiently to make it clear. He objected to permission being given to Departments to ask for very small sums, in order to incur new expenditure and to deduct estimated saving, because it was productive of extravagance in the Department. There were strong instances further on which he intended to bring under the notice of the Committee in due course. He did not say the Committee was in full possession of the facts; all he did contend was, that the facts were stated in a very complicated way.

Mr. RAIKES said, he had heard some thousands of explanations from Secretaries to the Treasury when their Estimates had been challenged; but he did not think he ever heard one more imperfect or more unsatisfactory than that just given by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney). The point to which he ventured to call attention was, the estimated expenditure under a particular Act, which, as the hon. Gentleman told them, was passed after the Estimates for last year were framed. The objection which he (Mr. Raikes) took to the Estimate was, that there was a confusion of the expenditure under the Labourers' Act with the expenditure which had been authorized by Parliament before that Act was passed. The hon. Gentleman offered no satisfactory explanation of the Estimate, and he (Mr. Raikes) protested most strongly against this attempt to confuse the public mind by mixing up transactions under an Act of Parliament passed at the latter part of last Session with the sums authorized by Parliament at a time when the Act was not passed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) should take exception to the form of this Estimate, because, as far as he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) remembered, it had never fallen to the right hon. Gentleman's lot to lay any Estimates before Parliament. It was, however, a matter of surprise to him that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth), who had had charge of a Department, should take exception to the form in which the Estimates were presented. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to find a precedent for such Estimates as the present he only had to refer to the Supplementary Estimates brought in from time to time by the late Government, and there he would find the same plan adopted. The right hon. Gentleman ought to bear in mind the character of his own Estimates. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan)—he was afraid the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) could not answer the question—if he would explain how it was that the advertisements which were charged for under this sub-head somehow or other always managed to get into the papers which advocated the political views of the landlords, and very seldom got into the papers which advocated popular opinions? The public money was expended upon these advertisements; but the popular papers hardly ever got a single one of the announcements. He spoke from personal observation. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman could answer the question; but unquestionably this was a matter which excited a considerable amount of comment in Ireland. As to the accuracy of the complaint he made, he would be happy to furnish the right hon. Gentleman with abundant proof from papers circulated in the county which he represented?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that when he had the honour to be connected with the Admiralty his attention was frequently called to the question of advertisements, and he went into it very closely. He gave orders that the advertisements for each of the towns in England where they wished to have their wants and requirements made known should be distributed to the papers, without any regard being had to the political views advocated by the papers; that the advertisements should be distributed in exact proportion to the sale of the different papers. That seemed to him to be the only true principle upon which they ought to proceed in the matter. This was what he did at the Admiralty; but he had frequently expressed the desire that the same principle should be carried out with regard to advertising in Ireland. He should be very much obliged to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) if he would give him some specific instances in which those orders had not been carried out, because both in England and in Ireland he was perfectly certain that there was that amount of good sense in the public mind that no newspaper would have a very large circulation which did not display some common sense in the advocacy of the opinions it espoused. He considered that in Ireland, as in England, the only safe standard by which to judge the right of newspapers to advertisements was their circulation. He would feel indebted to any hon. Gentleman who could supply him with instances of advertisements having been given to newspapers with small circulation, and withheld from those enjoying large circulation.

MR. O'DONNELL said, the Committee must have sympathized with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) in the surprise which he expressed at the propositions laid down by the Secretary to the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman, when Chairman of Committees, was present at so many Ministerial explanations that he must be familiar with the Ministerial mode of setting forth Estimates. There was no doubt that the Committee expected a good deal from the presiding authority; but it had never yet occurred to any portion of the House to lay the burden on the Committee of understanding Ministerial explanations. He had been impressed with the explanations he had heard so far; he had now merely to ask for an additional one. Could not Item "H" be constructed on some more business-like plan? Item "H" related to the salaries of medical officers and to the cost of medicines, &c. It seemed to him that nothing could be more indefinite than such an item as the "Supply of Medicine, &c." Amongst other reasons, he believed the salary was administered to the medical attendants, and the medicine was usually administered to the patient. But besides that distinction he conceived that they would have a very considerable clue to the amount of attention the patients received if they knew something of the amount expended on medicine. Neither in the Vote nor in the explanation was there anything to guide them as to how much of the sum of £1,552 represented salaries, and how much represented medicine. All they were told under the sub-head was that it represented a comparatively slight increase in the salaries of medical officers, and an increase of over 7 per cent in the cost of medicines. Could they not have placed in the Vote a separate item for salaries for medical officers, and a separate item for medicines? He could see no reason whatever—except the judicial reason that Ministers had an object in maintaining this confused state of things—in presenting Estimates in the present form.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR moved that the Chairman do now report Progress. He said it was rather early in the Session for the Committee to begin voting away public money in the small hours of the morning; besides, anyone who had watched the conduct of the Government to-night must have realized the fact that the Government themselves were not prepared for the consideration of these Estimates. It was amusing to witness the Secretary to the Treasury make as plausible a show of explanation on every point suggested when he had no material to work upon; the hon. Gentleman had, in fact, only his imagination to work upon, for apparently he had no access to anything which could help him on any point which was broached by any hon. Member. It was a pity to continue such a performance merely for the sake of enabling the Government to get through these Votes in a perfunctory fashion, and in a weary Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. COURTNEY said, he hoped they would be allowed to take the next Vote—namely, that for the Irish Public Works Office.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the reason why he was anxious to have the next Vote postponed was that he had some reason to suppose that the hon. Gentleman was not in a position to give him information with reference to a matter which he regarded as of the first importance to his constituency—he referred to the state of the Barrow Basin, for which the Public Works Office was responsible.

Mr. COURTNEY remarked, that the next Vote had no reference whatever to the Barrow Basin.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg your pardon. I could show it.

Mr. COURTNEY: I do not see it.

Mr. SEXTON said, he hoped that when the Vote was taken the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, or some other Member of the Government, would give them some particulars of the measures taken to improve and develop the piers and harbours of Ireland.

Mr. BLAKE gave Notice that when the Vote was taken he should ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the Secretary to the Treasury, whether the Vote included any portion of the expenses of the piers and harbours? He wished for one moment to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the fact that last year the Parliament voted out of the Church Fund——

The CHAIRMAN said, he must point out that the Question before the Committee was to report Progress. The hon. Gentleman must confine himself strictly to the Question.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he desired to know whether the Board of Works had prepared rough Estimates with respect to the improvement of the piers and harbours? The Grand Jury of County Clare would meet on Monday next——

The CHAIRMAN reminded the hon. Gentleman that he was departing from the Question before the Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

BANKRUPTCY APPEALS (COUNTY COURTS) BILL.—[*Lords.*]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

[BILL 118.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that, when the Bill was mentioned last night, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) expressed a desire to receive some explanation of its provisions. He (the Solicitor General) had given the hon. and learned Gentleman explanations which were perfectly satisfactory. The Bill was introduced for the purpose of providing that, in case of an appeal from a County Court exercising its jurisdiction under the Bankruptcy Act, the appeal, instead of being taken to the Court of Appeal, should be taken to a Divisional Court, consisting of the Judge in Bankruptcy and one other Judge. There was now a considerable block in the Court of Appeal, and it was felt that the Judge in Bankruptcy, with another Judge, would form a very satisfactory tribunal for the hearing of bankruptcy appeals. The Bill provided that from the proposed Divisional Court there might be an appeal in the same way as now to the House of Lords.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Solicitor General.*)

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was gratified to hear the statement made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) urged, but in vain, similar views to those the hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed to the House in the Grand Committee which sat last year; but neither the hon. and learned Gentleman nor the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) could see the least force in the arguments which he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) advanced. He pointed out that the bankruptcy appeals would unquestionably block the Court of Appeal, and the suggestion he made was that an appeal from the County Court should lay, not to the Court of Appeal, but to a Divisional Court. That was precisely the plan which the Government had found it necessary to adopt; and, under the circumstances, he, of course, could not object in the least to this amending Bill. He had no doubt that other Amendments which were opposed in the Grand Committee would, in due course, find a place on the Statute Book.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY was of opinion that the time of the Judge of the Bankruptcy Division of the High Court of Justice was spent in trying Quarter Sessions cases on Circuit with very little advantage to litigants.

MR. WARTON said, he thought the Solicitor General would support him when he said it was not always of advantage to have a Judge who was an expert in the line of professional business which came before him. The present system, in some respects, was a weak one. It was inconvenient that, instead of there being a direct appeal from the Bankruptcy Court, the Act provided for a still further appeal. There was an appeal to the Bankruptcy Judge in cipher, and then an appeal to the Court of Appeal. This seemed to him to be an unnecessary extension of litigation in the case of just those who were least able to pay for it.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he did not wish to prolong the debate; but he certainly thought there was one observation which should be made. They had been treated more than once on behalf of Her Majesty's Government to an eulogium of the work of the Grand Committees, and the particular work which had been singled out for special praise had been this Bankruptcy Act. It was worthy of remark that, at almost the commencement of the Session, one of the few Bills it was absolutely necessary to bring in to prevent a block of business that was intolerable was a Bill to amend the Act which was the result of so many anxious weeks' work in the Grand Committee on Trade. He was not one of those who regarded the Grand Committees as having been a successful experiment. There was one Committee that was absolutely useless, and they had another the result of which they were able now to test for the first time. The ink of the Statute was hardly dry when down came the Government to say that the state of things which existed was intolerable, and that they were bound, at 1 o'clock in the morning, to ask the House to say nothing, but, for goodness sake, to let them bring in a Bill to amend the work of the Standing Committee—the one work which they had been so ready to praise as establishing the success of the Grand Committees. He did not give any opinion as to the value of this amending measure; but it might be found by experience that the work of the Grand Committees in many other respects was a failure, and required amendment, and that this was only the first of a series of amending Bills which were necessary to put into shape the unsatisfactory fruits of the labours of the Grand Committees.

MR. WHITLEY said, he wished to call attention to one class of appeal. There was an appeal from the County Court to the Divisional Court, and then the appeal section, in the last line but one, said—

> "Unless it seems fit to the Divisional Court or Court of Appeal to appeal to Her Majesty's Court of Appeal."

There was no special Court of Appeal described in the section, and he did not understand the thing. There seemed to him to be some mistake.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he observed the language referred to by the hon. Member, and would look into the matter. The meaning of the section was clear, and several Acts of Parliament contained words precisely similar. What was meant was, that there was not to be an absolute right of appeal, but that permission to appeal must be obtained from the Divisional Court or the Court of Appeal.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTION.

——o——

REVISION OF JURORS AND VOTERS LISTS (DUBLIN COUNTY) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to facilitate the Revision of Lists of Jurors and

Voters, and the Registration of Voters, in the county of Dublin."—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the hon. and learned Gentleman would explain to the House what was meant by the Bill?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the object of the measure was to transfer from the Recorder to a Revising Barrister appointed by the Lord Lieutenant the duty of revising jurors' and voters' lists. The work was now performed by the Recorder, but his duties had become too onerous for him to continue it. The Bill was the same as that introduced in 1881, which it was found necessary to drop, on account of pressure of Business, as hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite would, no doubt, remember. He could enter into a more detailed explanation of the Bill, if necessary; but it did not appear to him requisite, seeing that it was the same measure as that of 1881.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, he wished to know whether any part of the Bill would extend the number of the polling places in Ireland?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): It is not necessary. The power of extending the number of polling places is vested in the Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. HARRINGTON: The number of revising places, I mean.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): That is already provided for in an Act of Parliament. There is to be a revising place in each polling district.

Mr. HARRINGTON: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman be able to give the names of the Revising Barrister or Barristers to be appointed before the second reading?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): I am not in a position to say.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 124.]

QUESTIONS.

——o——

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—STATE OF AFFAIRS AT SUAKIN.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Before the House adjourns, seeing the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in his place, I wish to ask whether, since the House met, Her Majesty's Government have received any further information as to the state of affairs at Suakin, and of the operations of the forces?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have seen the telegrams received from *Reuter's Agency*, which contain information that has not been confirmed by the Government telegrams. The latest telegram that has been received is one from Consul Baker at Suakin, dated 1st March, 1 a.m., and received at the Foreign Office at half-past 12 to-night. The telegram is as follows:—

> "Suakin very quiet—town and camp. No appearance of enemy in the direction indicated—namely, beyond outposts. No news of results of engagement, but may be expected at daybreak."

There is no reason to suppose, otherwise than from this telegram, that there has been any engagement at all. On the other hand, *Reuter's* telegrams seem to contradict that statement.

DYNAMITE OUTRAGES — REPORTED EXPLOSION AT ST. PANCRAS STATION.

Mr. MONTAGU SCOTT: Before the House adjourns, I will take the liberty of asking the right hon. Gentleman whether he has received any information of the rumour which has spread all over London that St. Pancras Station has been blown up to-night?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No such information had reached my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary up to a quarter past 12 o'clock to-night.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT BILL.

Resolution [Feb 28] *reported*, and *agreed to*, *Nemine Contradicente*: — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 123.]

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS (PERPETUAL ANNUITIES), INDIAN LOAN ACT 1881 (TERMINABLE ANNUITY).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. *Resolved,* That it is expedient to amend the terms upon which Perpetual Annuities held on Account of Post Office Savings Banks may be converted into Two and a Half per Centum Perpetual Annuities.

2. *Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorise the redemption from time to time of the balance outstanding of the Terminable Annuity granted in pursuance of "The Indian Loan Act, 1881."

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

DUBLIN MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all Expenses of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, which may be incurred under the provisions of any Act of Parliament of the present Session for conferring further powers upon the said Commissioners of acquiring lands in Dublin for the purposes of the Dublin Science and Art Museum Act, 1877.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter
after One o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 3rd March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Brokers (City of London) * (24); Medical Act Amendment * (23).

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY**: Seeing that he is in his place, I wish to ask the noble Earl opposite, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has any information to give to the House with respect to the policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue in regard to the expedition to the Soudan, and especially with reference to the announcement which appears this morning, that orders had been given for the immediate withdrawal of General Graham's forces from Tokar, and the littoral of the Red Sea?

EARL **GRANVILLE**: In answer to the Question of the noble Marquess, I have to say that I am aware of the report that appears this morning, stating that orders had been given for the withdrawal of the troops from the littoral of the Red Sea. I can only say there is absolutely no foundation for it.

ENGLAND AND RUSSIA—VOYAGE OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD **STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL**: My Lords, I rise to ask the Government, according to the Notice I have given, Whether the reports which appeared in September last, as to the visit of Mr. Gladstone to Copenhagen were well-founded; and, whether, if they were well-founded, he had received instructions from the Foreign Office to direct him? Not only have I no desire to address the House at length, but I have determined to avoid it, because the reply of the Government may lead to subsequent proceedings, on which opinions would more properly be given. It is only necessary to observe that the reports, of what is alleged to have taken place at Copenhagen, were uniform in nearly all the journals of the United Kingdom and the Continent. It is admitted that no event during the autumn produced more criticism and reflection. But still, officially, we know nothing whatever. If the accepted statements were untrue, it is just to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to mention it. If, while they are well-founded, he had instructions and proceeded on some kind diplomatic mission, it is just to him to mention it. If the incident arose, but rests on his responsibility alone, it is just to the remainder of the Cabinet that such a declaration should be given. No doubt, I am exposed to the remark, that during the last four weeks the subject might have been alluded to; but Parliament has been so much absorbed by the vicissitudes of Egypt, that there appeared to be sufficient reason for delaying it. I therefore put the Question on the Paper, and remind the Government that it cannot be disposed of by levity or persiflage, although it may admit a satisfactory reply.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I am extremely obliged to my noble Friend (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) for the solicitude which he has shown for Mr. Gladstone on the one hand and for his Colleagues on the other, and I hope I shall treat the subject with all the gravity—though it is a little difficult to treat it with gravity—that it deserves. In his Question, the noble Lord asks me whether the accounts published in September last were well founded? Now, my Lords, if I recollect aright, the accounts of that meeting were so very numerous, and contained so exceedingly different versions of what was supposed to have passed, that I am glad my noble Friend has spared your Lordships the infliction of hearing them read. However, as I have said, they were exceedingly numerous and exceedingly different, and I did not know, until I heard my noble Friend's speech, which of them his Question referred to. I cannot help being a little surprised that my noble Friend, with his well-stored mind, and the attention which he has paid to public affairs, should have thought it possible, after six months' reflection on the circumstances, that either Mr. Gladstone should, without the knowledge of his Sovereign and his Colleagues, have undertaken a diplomatic negotiation on his own account; or, on the other hand, that the Government, wishing to come to some understanding with the Court of Russia, should have taken such a mysterious mode of carrying out their purpose as to send the Prime Minister out in an enormous steamer to carry out their object. I happen to know the facts of this matter, and they are these. Mr. Gladstone accepted an invitation from Sir Donald Currie to take a cruise on the West Coast of Scotland. Owing to the speed of the vessel it arrived at the Island of Orkney sooner than it was expected to do. One of the guests of Sir Donald Currie—not Mr. Gladstone—expressed a strong wish to be taken to see a little of Norway. Sir Donald Currie consented; Mr. Gladstone did not object, and, being at Norway, they were tempted to extend their voyage further on to Copenhagen. As regards the Emperor of Russia and his suite, and Mr. Gladstone and his friends, not a single word on any political subject passed of any kind whatever. I am really not sure that it is quite respectful to your Lordships, or to the Prime Minister, to give these details about a holiday trip taken immediately after the termination of a hard Session. They will, however, serve a useful purpose in disabusing my noble Friend's mind of the mysterious views which he entertains with regard to this question.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: I must say that I think the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) has treated us to an extremely pretty and interesting nursery tale.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has been inaccurate in speaking of my "mysterious views" on the occurrence. As yet I have refrained from giving my views upon it. But I rose again only that no error may exist as to the answer of the noble Earl and of the Government. I understand it to be that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury proceeded to Copenhagen with no instructions from the Foreign Office?

EARL GRANVILLE: Absolutely none.

LAW AND POLICE—THE RECENT DYNAMITE OUTRAGES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD WAVENEY inquired, Whether there would be any difficulty in examining luggage of passengers on sea-going steamers before disembarkation; and whether it would not be practicable to examine all luggage tendered for deposit at cloak rooms at railways or other public places? He was aware of the difficulty there might be in making any premature statement; but he put these Questions in the interest of the public, for in the present agitated state of the public mind, when they were discovering, day after day, a determination on the part of a certain mysterious body of conspirators to inflict grave injury upon persons and property, and to carry devastation, if possible, and certainly cause distrust and suspicion among the community at large, he thought something should be done to prevent a recurrence of such outrages, to counteract the risk to public safety, and to obviate the possibility of, he would not say plunging the country into war, but a state of suspicion and diplomatic friction with the Government of the United States of America. The change which he thought desirable was that all parcels brought to a railway station for safekeeping should be thoroughly examined before they were received on deposit instead of after. He had been told that there might be some difficulty in carrying out the examination of luggage as suggested in his Questions, owing to the number of parcels; but he submitted that no local difficulties ought to be allowed to stand in the way of any possible precautions against a great public peril. The terror and apprehension caused in the public mind should be removed as soon as possible; and if this were done, the conspirators would not likely take part in any enterprize which involved so much danger. In the proportion of three to two the Railway Companies would, he believed, carry out a preliminary examination of all luggage left at their stations. He considered that if they continued to permit these terrors to be cast broadcast amongst the population, a very serious responsibility would rest upon them. In the plan which he suggested an attempt was made to meet the evil before it reached our shores, and if it reached our shores, the resolute, stout-hearted action of the Railway Companies would intercept this mischief at its source, and minimize the risk which the public suffered at present. At the present moment, it was comparatively easy to evade the vigilance of the Custom House authorities, as, notwithstanding all their precautionary measures, contraband goods found their way from the ship to the quay, and from the quay to all parts of the country; and, in his opinion, all ocean-going steamers should be carefully searched on arrival. These precautions would, he thought, be quite justified. He was the more concerned because of his strong sense of the deterioration that had been wrought in the public spirit of Ireland by the committal of outrages.

EARL GRANVILLE: In answer to the Question of my noble Friend behind me, your Lordships will not be sorry to hear that the objects implied in the Question put to me have not escaped the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and especially of the Home Office. All I think it necessary to add is this. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) and I have sometimes had friendly discussions as to whether reticence is reasonable or unreasonable on the part of Her Majesty's Government, as to which we may not be always in agreement; but I appeal with some confidence to the noble Marquess and noble Lords behind him, and to noble Lords behind me, whether it is not desirable that some reticence should be observed both in respect of questions and of answers as to the precautions which the Executive are bound to take in regard to the dastardly outrages which are being perpetrated.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill for the consolidation and amendment of the law relating to medical practitioners—Was *presented* by The Lord PRESIDENT; read 1ª. (No. 23.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 3rd March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—William Thackeray Marriott, esquire, *for* Brighton.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee — Resolutions* [February 29] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Medina (Isle of Wight) Subway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolutions* [Feb. 29] *reported*—*Ordered*—Post Office Savings Banks (Perpetual Annuities), Indian Loan Act, 1881 (Terminable Annuity).

Resolution in Committee – Ordered—First Reading — Licensing Acts Amendment * [126].

Ordered—Local Government Provisional Orders.*

Ordered—First Reading—Representation of the People [119].

First Reading—Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) * [125].

Second Reading—Mr. Speaker's Retirement * [123]; Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases [4].

Committee—Valuation (Metropolis) Amendment* [108]—R.P.

Third Reading—Greek Marriages * [102], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

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CRIMINAL LAW (SCOTLAND)—CASE OF A RAILWAY GUARD.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that a guard, committed for trial on August 7th 1883, for culpable neglect of duty in connection with a collision at Perth on the 28th of the previous month, was not brought to trial till the 14th of January 1884, when he was acquitted; whether such long delay is exceptional; and, whether he will consider the possibility of making arrangements which will prevent its occurrence in future?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The case referred to is the trial of two railway servants for culpable homicide. The dates mentioned are correct. The accused were out on bail during the whole period. The delay in the trial was certainly quite exceptional. The case occurred in August, just too late to be tried at the Autumn Circuit at Perth in that month, and it was found advisable to wait for the Report of the Board of Trade, which caused the delay of a month. This Report was obtained in November, and the trial was ordered to take place before the Sheriff and jury in that month. Certain points were then raised, as I understand, as to whether their trials should not be separated, and the trial was then postponed till the Justiciary sittings in January, when the circumstances were fully explained in Court. I may add that arrangements for the expeditious trial of prisoners have been greatly improved under the present Government by the establishment of additional Circuits and otherwise.

THE "LONDON GAZETTE"—ADVERTISEMENTS.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a notice, issued from *The London Gazette* Office, to the effect that all advertisements must be ordered personally, and, if from the country, "through the hands of an agent in London," and that "payment will not be received in money," but must be made in *London Gazette* stamps; whether the effect of this rule is not to add a guinea fee to a London solicitor to the cost of statutory county advertisements inserted in *The London Gazette;* and, whether he will consider the advisability of cancelling regulations inconvenient and costly to the public, and not found necessary in the case of *The Edinburgh Gazette?*

Mr. COURTNEY: My hon. Friend seems to suppose that the regulation in question is a new one. I am assured that this is not the case, and that the notice to which he refers merely expresses what has been the invariable practice of *The London Gazette* Office. The reason for the regulation is to secure that any informality in a notice may be pointed out and corrected without the delay of correspondence; it thus probably in the end saves the time and money of the advertisers. The agent need not be a solicitor, but an advertisement agent, whose charge would be much less than a guinea. The business of *The Edinburgh Gazette* is so small that no real comparison can be drawn between it and *The London Gazette.*

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL TRAINING OF GIRLS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have yet furnished any statement to him with regard to the suggestions of the Catholic Bishop of Meath as to the industrial training of girls; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Commissioners are making special inquiries upon this subject through their Inspectors; but these gentlemen have not yet made their Report.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the Report be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I will ask the Commissioners.

IRELAND—THE TOWN CLERK OF BANGOR, CO. DOWN—ALLEGED DEFALCATIONS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether on 14th July last Local Government Board Auditor attended at Bangor to audit the town accounts for 1882; did auditor postpone visit at the request of the town clerk, and in the meantime did the clerk replace a portion of the rates for 1882 by his collections on account of 1883; did auditor discover that upwards of £200 of the rates for 1883 had been embezzled; also upwards of £14 of arrears for 1881, which latter should have been credited in 1882 account; did auditor again visit Bangor on 3rd August in consequence of reports forwarded to the Local Government Board by Mr. Atkinson, and had auditor any communications, verbal or written, with the Town Commissioners or their clerk with reference to their defalcations, and was it at auditor's suggestion that certain books were destroyed, and that the clerk asked to be relieved of the duties of collector; what report did auditor forward to his department, seeing that the deficiency in 1883 rates was only made good the day before his visit, and that the arrears had not been returned; and, did auditor ascertain if any part of the loans obtained for sanitary or other purposes had been used to defray current expenditure, seeing that it was not till 30th August that any part of the ordinary town rate for 1883 was lodged?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Auditor attended at Bangor, on the 14th of July, to audit the township accounts, but had to postpone his auditing owing to an outbreak of scarlatina in the clerk's family. He did attend for the same purpose on the 12th of last month. His visit on the 3rd of August was for a different purpose. He had no conversation with either the Town Commissioners or the clerk with regard to defalcations; and he suggested the appointment of a rate collector, because he thought the position of clerk and rate collector incompatible. As he has not yet commenced his audit, the statement that he discovered irregularities and defalcations is without foundation.

IRELAND—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT—ELECTION OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS AT BANGOR, CO. DOWN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Did Mr. Archibald Thomson, in his communications to the Local Government Board, Mr. Trevelyan, the President, or His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, inform them, with other things, that, at the annual election for Town Commissioners at Bangor, county Down, in October last, unqualified persons, being in arrear of rates, stood as candidates; and also that a large number of similar persons were entered on voters' list and voted; and, further, that in spite of written protests, the unqualified candidates were put forward and declared duly elected, and act as Commissioners; and, can the October election be held as valid if the facts are as stated by Mr. Thomson?

Mr. TREVELYAN: A letter was received from Mr. Archibald Thomson in October last relating to the election of Town Commissioners at Bangor, and calling in question the proceedings in several respects—among others, the alleged non-payment of rates by candidates and voters. Mr. Thomson was informed, in reply, that the Local Government Board had no control in the matter. It is no part of my duty to express an opinion on the validity of an election. I am advised that if any person desired to impeach the election it should have been done in the manner and in the time prescribed by law.

INLAND REVENUE—CULTIVATION OF TOBACCO.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he has prepared a scheme for allowing the agriculturists of the United Kingdom to grow tobacco for sale?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In accordance with the promise I gave the noble Lord during last Session, I have carefully inquired into this subject during the Recess. The facts seem to be that for a certain number of years, beginning in 1779, and I think ending in 1830, tobacco was allowed to be grown in Ireland. At the end of that period a Committee of this House, I believe, sat, and a Bill was passed putting an end to that permission. At that time the Free Trade rules, which are now the basis of our legislation, were not so well understood, and the tobacco grown in Ireland was not subjected to duty—that is to say, if consumed in Ireland. Of course, now, if the permission was restored, the tobacco would have to pay an Excise duty countervailing the Customs duty. I am quite certain that as the old experiment when there was no duty practically failed—not much tobacco, and that of inferior quality, having been grown—nothing would be gained if the permission was now granted. With the Excise duty it would fail altogether, unless on the part of those who might hope to escape the duty. I, therefore, after the fullest consideration, have come to the conclusion that it would not be expedient to allow the growth of tobacco in this country.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: I will call further attention to the subject.

SCOTLAND—EVICTION OF CROFTERS AT TOBERMORY FOR EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the eviction of two crofters at Tobermory, on the alleged ground that they had given evidence adverse to their landlord before the Royal Commission; if he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances, and if it is true that the landlord in question was not asked, in the usual manner, to promise indemnity to the crofter delegates; and, if he can state the reason for this omission?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have inquired into this case, and am informed that the crofter delegates usually, or often, asked for an assurance of immunity before giving evidence, and then the Chairman always put a question on the subject to the landlords or their representatives; but at Tobermory the delegates made no mention of the matter, and, therefore, no assurance was demanded. A long controversial correspondence has passed with the proprietor and a person writing on behalf of the men who were removed, which will be appended to the Report of the Commission.

SCOTLAND—THE ROYAL COMMISSION UPON THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS—THE REPORT.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, When the Report of the Royal Commission upon the Crofters of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland will be in the hands of Members?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I understand that the Report has proved to be a work of great labour, and that it is not likely to be ready before the end of this month.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

Mr. MACFARLANE: Would it not be possible to publish the evidence without waiting for the Report?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): In answer to a previous Question of the hon. Member, I stated that it was not according to usage in the case of the Report of a Royal Commission to publish the evidence till the Report is presented.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—FIRING INTO A CONVENT AT LURGAN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on 28th September last, shots were fired into the convent of St. Vincent de Paul, in Lurgan; whether a number of pellets were found embedded in the wall of the house; whether similar pellets were not found in a house from which the shots might have been fired against the wall of the convent; and, whether the Government have offered any reward for the discovery of the perpetrators of the outrage, and what means they have used to discover the guilty party?

Mr. TREVELYAN: On the afternoon of the 28th of September several panes of glass were broken in the windows of a house in Lurgan occupied by the Order of St. Vincent de Paul. The mischief is believed to have been done with an air-gun. Some pellets were found in the room; but it is not the case that any were embedded in the wall, or that any were discovered in a house from which the shot from the air-gun might have been fired. Close inquiry and search were made by the police, but no reward for information was offered. Ample precaution has since been taken to prevent the repetition of the annoyance.

PROTESTANT CLERGYMEN AND CATHOLIC TRADERS (IRELAND).

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any information that, on Sunday the 9th of December last, the Rev. Mr. Burroughs, Incumbent of the Mariners' Church, Kingstown, Dublin, delivered in that church a discourse, in which he advised the congregation not to deal with Catholic traders, and recommended by name one Protestant trader to their patronage; and, whether his attention has been drawn to the comments in the local press on the discourse in question; whether advice of a like character has been lately given in sermons preached by the Rev. Dr. Neligan in the Molyneux Church, Leeson Park, Dublin, and by the Rector of Nenagh, county Tipperary, in the parish church of Nenagh; whether an Orange circular, printed in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 23rd January last, and emanating from the "Members of the Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 795, Ballymote (county Sligo), in Lodge assembled," had attached to it the names of Rev. G. T. Walker, Emlafad Glebe, Ballymote; Rev. Thomas Cosgrove, Lissadell Parsonage; Rev. Thomas Henry, Calry Glebe; Rev. J. Allen French, Rectory, Drumcliffe; and Rev. James Todd, Moneygold Grange; and whether this circular called on Protestant landlords of the county—

> "To take into consideration the just claims of Protestant young men, with a view to giving them farms and such other privileges as circumstances of the future may permit and suggest;"

and desiring that the chaplains of the several Orange lodges might

> "Be communicated with respecting any vacant farms or situations to be filled up;"

whether the clergymen named admit their responsibility for the document in question; and, whether such incitements and suggestions, in sermons or otherwise, are exempt from the operation of sec 7 of "The Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882;" and, if so, whether a like exemption applies to similar proceedings on the part of the Catholic clergy?

MR. GIBSON: Before this Question is answered, I would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has received communications from the Rev. Mr. Burroughs and the Rev. Dr. Neligan; and whether he is aware that they both repudiate distinctly the use of such language with regard to Roman Catholic tradesmen?

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes, Sir; two rev. gentlemen, Dr. Neligan and the Rector of Nenagh, have, unsolicited, communicated with me in the sense stated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), and they emphatically denounce the statements with regard to them as having no foundation. The Government has no means of verifying these statements, even if they were inclined to do so, and do not feel called upon to express an opinion on the abstract point raised with regard to them. As regards the Circular, I am advised at some length that the clergymen who signed it could not be prosecuted under the Prevention of Crime Act.

MR. SEXTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman say that he received such a letter from the Rev. Mr. Burroughs?

MR. GIBSON: I received such a letter. I have it here.

MR. TREVELYAN: My strong impression is, that I got a letter from the Rev. Mr. Burroughs, repudiating the assertion, and the other two gentlemen communicated with me and the Irish Office.

MR. SEXTON: Do the gentlemen named in the fourth paragraph admit the Circular?

MR. TREVELYAN: With regard to the fourth paragraph, I do not know that they admit their responsibility; but I got a legal opinion, which is conclusive, of the impossibility of bringing such a case within the scope of the Intimidation Clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — ROUNDSTONE NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the dismissal by the magistrates of the claim for school fees of Mr. James Connorton, national teacher, against the head constable of Roundstone, for the education of his two boys for six months at the Roundstone National School; and, whether the schoolmaster acted in strict accordance with the rules of the Commissioners of Education, and with the approval of the manager as to the amount of the fees fined and demanded?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have received a Report, from which it appears that the teacher stated on oath before the magistrate that he had no arrangement with the Head Constable as to the payment of fees; but that it was optional with him to charge him or not. It further appeared that, after more than one complaint, the Head Constable had been obliged to remove his children from the school, in consequence of the manner in which they had been beaten by the teacher, and that he had been put to an expense thereby. Taking this into consideration, together with the fact that there had been no agreement to pay the sum processed for, the magistrates were unanimous in dismissing the case. I cannot review their decision. I have received a Report from the Commissioners of Education, in which they state they do not know the ground on which the process was dismissed. An appeal is open to the teacher.

RUSSIA—ENFORCED NATURALIZATION OF BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Under Secretery of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government is aware that British subjects employed on certain Russian Railways have received an intimation to the effect that, unless they became Russian subjects within three months from the date of such intimation, they will be required to resign the appointments they at present hold; and, whether any step can be taken to obtain the withdrawal of the order?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Lord Granville's attention has been called to the subject, and Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has been instructed to make inquiries and report.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: May I ask whether, in the event of these unfortunate men being dismissed, Her Majesty's Government will make any effort to obtain compensation?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Lord Granville will naturally wait for the Report before deciding what course he will take.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL — THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the British Government have given their sanction to the title of South African Republic assumed by the Rulers of the Transvaal State; and, whether the title implies a sovereignty or a suzerainty over the Cape Colony and other portions of South Africa external to the Transvaal; and, if such is not the interpretation of the title, what is its real meaning?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: In the Convention just signed with the Transvaal State recognition has been given to the use of the title of South African Republic. ["Oh, oh!"] I am quite at a loss to understand those groans. I may remind hon. Members that the title of the South African Republic was in use until the British annexation in 1877; and one of the principal objects of the Delegates was to obtain a formal recognition of their old title, which has been continuously employed in their laws and public documents. It implies no sort of suzerainty, jurisdiction, or authority over any other portion of South Africa whatever outside of the strictly-defined Frontiers of the Republic.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—ALLEGED INTRUSION OF THE POLICE.

Mr. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on January 6th 1884, Constable Galligan, accompanied by two men, forced his way into the house of Mrs. Rodgers, of Carlanstown, county Meath, where a few young people were at tea; whether the names of all present were taken by the constable; whether he ordered them to disperse within five minutes, under pain of being arrested; what charge was made against these people; and, whether the constable's conduct meets with the approval of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The constables did not force their way into the house. They were admitted without delay when they knocked at the door. They found no young people at tea, but a company of 10 men, all known to the police, and most of them suspicious characters, and two girls. They were not ordered to disperse. No threat of arrest was made, and no charge was made against the people. Two of the men were requested to go home, which they did. The police had reason to believe that it was intended to hold an illegal meeting, under cover of a dance.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. POLLOCK, J.P., MOUNTAINSTOWN, CO. MEATH.

Mr. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on January 1st 1884, Mr. Pollock, J.P. of Mountainstown, in the county of Meath, stopped a boy named

Charles Reilly, and searched him for arms; whether Mr. Pollock acted legally; whether Mr. Pollock is High Sheriff for the county Meath; and, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland to call upon Mr. Pollock for an explanation of his conduct?

MR. TREVELYAN: From inquiries made, it appears that Mr. Pollock heard a shot fired on land which he preserves, and, going in the direction of it, met three young men, and amongst them Charles Reilly. He asked Reilly whether he had a revolver, and touched the outside of his coat pockets. He did not otherwise search him, nor, beyond this, did he lay a hand on him. Mr. Pollock's herd was fired at about 12 months ago, and he is anxious about persons carrying arms in his neighbourhood. Mr. Pollock was not High Sheriff when the occurrence took place. I do not think the matter calls for any further notice on the part of the Government.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS (IRELAND)—THE GAUGE QUESTION.

MR. CARBUTT asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Government have definitely decided that the new Railways which are to be constructed in Ireland under the Local Loans Act are to be constructed on the metre gauge, thus inflicting on Ireland the inconvenience of a break of gauge, which has been found so disadvantageous in India; whether he is aware that Light Railways of the Irish gauge can be constructed at a cost of only ten per cent. increase above the cost of a metre gauge Railway; and, whether he has considered how far the greater wear and tear of the toy locomotive may in the end neutralise the saving from the smaller original first outlay?

MR. TREVELYAN: Perhaps my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury would permit me to answer this Question. I assume that my hon. Friend intends his Question to refer to projected lines under the Tramways and Public Companies Act of last Session. The Lord Lieutenant, after careful consideration, decided upon the 3-feet gauge as the most suitable. That is the gauge of all existing steam tramways and narrow-gauge railways in Ireland, and is found to be adequate for ordinary traffic. In the case of branch lines intended to develop the traffic on existing railways of the ordinary gauge, the Privy Council has power to sanction the wider gauge under special conditions as to the guarantee. I am not prepared to admit the accuracy of my hon. Friend's views as to the relative cost of construction and maintenance of broad and narrow gauge railways. But while I would hesitate to dispute his opinion on a professional point, I may say that His Excellency was not without eminent professional advice; and, further, that considerations such as these would form only a part of the case upon which the Government had to decide; and they came, after careful inquiry, to the conclusion which they considered most likely to promote the favourable working of the Act.

ARMY—THE ROYAL MILITARY ASYLUM, CHELSEA, AND HIBERNIAN MILITARY SCHOOL, DUBLIN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been drawn to the Report made last year by the Committee appointed to inquire, amongst other things, into matters connected with the Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea, and the Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin; whether he is aware that it was an Instruction to the Committee—

> "To inquire and Report as to the management of these schools, with a view to assimilate the regulations in force for the two institutions;"

whether he has observed that the proportion of teachers to pupils at Chelsea, as stated in the Report (page 19), is 1 to 121, and at the Hibernian School 1 to 137, while the salaries and emoluments of the teaching staff in the latter are much below the former; what is the reason, if any, for the inequality; and, whether he will carry out the apparent object of the inquiry, by causing the assimilation of the two institutions as regards the payment of the staff, as well as in other respects?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The discrepancy in the proportion of teachers to pupils in the two schools is due to the fact that on the death of one of the four teachers at the Hibernian School in 1880, the Governing Body of the school represented that it was unneccessary to appoint a successor. As regards the difference of the salaries of the teachers, those at the Duke of York's

School are all Army schoolmasters, and are paid in accordance with Army rates, their salaries increasing triennially up to 18 years' service. They only hold their appointments for seven years, and are liable to foreign service. The teachers at the Hibernian School are civilians, and are not liable to be moved from their appointments. It would obviously be inequitable to pay these teachers at the same rate as Army schoolmasters. On vacancies occurring at the Hibernian School I shall consider whether it is not desirable, as recommended by the Committee referred to, to fill them with Army schoolmasters, who would be paid as at Chelsea.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether it was a fact that the children were poorer and less robust in the Chelsea school, owing to insufficient feeding, than those sent to ordinary schools; and, whether the condition of the children in the Dublin school was not even worse than those in Chelsea?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: That raises a totally different point, and I would ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of it.

EGYPT (ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION)—HICKS PASHA.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that on the 5th June 1883, Hicks Pasha telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Wood to the following effect:—

> "The Government has been asked to send 5,000 more troops to Khartoum. These can only be collected by dragging unwilling men from their fields and homes, and sending them away in chains, and these men are to be taken at once before an enemy, having been previously in no way organised; and with what kind of officers. Of course I can have no reliance whatever on them. Will you send me instead four battalions of your new army, and I shall be content. They could return in six months. Fifty-one men of the Krupp Battery deserted on the way, although in chains;"

whether he is aware that Sir Evelyn Wood replied to the following effect:—

> "You are not aware of our position. It is impossible to comply with the request;"

whether Sir Evelyn Wood's reply was in any way due to communications to him by Sir Edward Malet, as to the probability of an early withdrawal of Her Majesty's troops from Cairo; and, if he can explain why these telegrams were not included in the Papers presented to Parliament?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government is not aware of the telegraphic communications mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman. I have the authority of Sir Edward Malet to state that if Sir Evelyn Wood in June last sent the answer quoted, it was not in consequence of any communication made by him as to the probability of an early withdrawal from Cairo, as no such communication passed.

SOLDIERS' PENSIONS AND YEOMANRY PAY BILL.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it be his intention to introduce again this Session the Bill which was read a first time in August last, abolishing the statutory powers of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital (Bill 297); and, if so, whether he will consent to place before the House, in the first instance, all papers received by him from that body, or their chairman, intended to dissuade him from pursuing this course?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; the Bill of last Session will be re-introduced, but in an amended form, which will, I have reason to believe, be satisfactory to the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital. In these circumstances, I think there would be no public advantage in laying the Papers referred to before the House.

ARMY—"MIXED" GUARDS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, How long the practice has been in vogue in Home garrisons of mounting "mixed" guards, consisting of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, of different corps, on the same guard; and, how far it commands the approval of the Military authorities; if he will also state what are the reasons which have led to the introduction of so novel a system; and, whether it is owing to the inability of some battalions to furnish a sufficient number of effective soldiers fit for duty?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no such practice in home garrisons generally; but in Dublin, where the guard duties have been for the past three years exceptionally heavy, it has occasionally been found advisable by the military authorities to mount mixed guards. The object has been to equalize guard duties, and to insure all ranks having four nights in bed. The expedient has rarely been resorted to oftener than once a-week, and very seldom without an officer being in command of the guard. There is always at least one non-commissioned officer belonging to the same corps as the men.

MERCHANT SHIPPING LEGISLATION—MR. CHAMBERLAIN AT BIRMINGHAM.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the President of the Board of Trade, If the following extract from his speech at Birmingham is correct:—

> "When I was at Newcastle the other day the shipowners told me that over-insurance was altogether uncommon. It is not uncommon. I say it deliberately, speaking in the due sense of the responsibility, that it is the commonest thing in the world. I have overwhelming proof that in a great number of cases the loss of a ship is actually a source of profit to the owners. Why, even in Newcastle, I had an illustration of it. In the very short time I stayed there, I met a gentleman who said: 'A few days ago I was speaking to the manager of a large steamship company, and I asked him what sort of a season he had had, and his reply was, we have been very unfortunate, we have had no losses;'"

and, if so, whether he is able to substantiate that statement?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The extract from my speech to which my hon. Friend calls my attention appears to have been reported with substantial accuracy. He asked me whether I can substantiate this statement; but I find there are two statements in the extract, and I am not quite certain to which he refers. There is a statement that I had a conversation in Newcastle with a gentleman there, the purport of which I gave in my speech. As to the fact of my having had that conversation, I have nothing but my own word for it, which I hope my hon. Friend will think sufficient. There is also a statement that when I was at Newcastle the shipowners told me that over-insurance was altogether uncommon, &c. If it is with regard to this second statement that my hon. Friend puts this Question, I have to say that I have a great mass of information on the subject which I hope to lay before the House whenever I have an opportunity of moving the second reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill, and which, I believe, will carry conviction to every impartial mind.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: I wish to explain that my Question was altered by the Clerk at the Table, and did not convey the meaning I had. What I wish to ask is, if the right hon. Gentleman could give us some information as to who the managing owner referred to in the speech is, because a person who does that is guilty of a criminal offence?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information on that subject. The only information I have is contained in my speech. I repeated a conversation I had at Newcastle, as to which I do not think it necessary to give the name, and I have not myself the name of the managing owner to whom the gentleman with whom I had the conversation referred. I gave the conversation rather as an illustration than as a fact. ["Oh, oh!"] I gave it rather as an illustration of the opinion which is prevalent, even in shipping ports, concerning this subject, than as a fact upon which I was going to lay much stress.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that by concealing the name of this person, who, by his own confession, has been guilty of a criminal act, he is himself conniving at the offence?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already said that I do not know the name of the person.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EMIGRATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. RANKIN asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether the Local Government Office is prepared to give to Boards of Guardians the necessary information to enable them to take steps to carry out their powers for the emigration of pauper children; and, whether, in view of the large and probably increasing emigration which will take place from this Country, the Government will take into their consideration the desirability of establishing a sub-department of either the Local Government Board or the Colonial Office to deal with all questions connected with emigration, and to be a channel for supplying all necessary information to intending emigrants?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We believe that Boards of Guardians are fully aware of their statutory powers with regard to the emigration of pauper children. If, in any case, they desired further information, we should be glad to supply it. As regards information as to particular Colonies, this is a question for the Crown Agents and Agents General of the Colonies. Emigration other than at the cost of the rates is not a matter which comes within our province, and we are not prepared to suggest the creation of such a Sub-Department for Emigration.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—LONDON BAKEHOUSES.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Lambeth Post*, of the Report of the medical officer of that parish, to the effect that some of the bakehouses which he had inspected were found to be in a very bad sanitary condition—

> "Several of them being below the ground level, and in some cases the sewage came through into the premises;"

and, whether it is his intention to introduce a Bill during the present Session to prevent the further erection of bakehouses below the level of the ground?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have to-day received the Report of the medical officer of Lambeth. It refers to a large number of cases in which sanitary defects in bakehouses were discovered; but it does not state that "sewage came through into the premises." Neither is it stated in that Report, although we do not doubt that such is the case, that several of the bakehouses are underground. We learn that notices have been served on the owners in every instance to remedy the sanitary defects, and that inspection will frequently be made. With reference to the question as to legislation to prevent the construction of underground bakehouses, a clause on this subject was introduced into the Factory and Workshops Bill of last Session, but was withdrawn in deference to opposition. The Act as passed, however, contains a provision that any occupier of a place used as a bakehouse, which is in such a state as to be unfit for such use, is liable to penalties, and this applies to bakehouses under, as well as those above ground. If experience should show that further legislation is required, we should be prepared to propose it.

Mr. BROADHURST wished to call attention to the fact that the best evidence that legislation was required was contained in a clause being introduced in the Bill of last year.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entitled to ask a Question; but he is now travelling beyond the limits of a Question.

Mr. BROADHURST: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the opposition to the clause in the Workshops Bill only consisted (so far as I know) of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith)?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Such I have understood to be the case.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE TOKAR EXPEDITION—ARTILLERY.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether Sir Gerald Graham, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Evelyn Baring requested that a battery of Horse Artillery should be sent with Sir Gerald Graham's expedition; whether that request was refused by Her Majesty's Government; at what date or dates such requests were made by any of the above Officers; at what dates they were refused; and, if he would explain the reasons for such refusal?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I have not received such a request from any of the officers referred to in the Question, and I do not know under what circumstances it could have been the duty of Sir Evelyn Baring to telegraph on such a subject. General Stephenson, on the 14th of February, telegraphed that General Baker recommended that a field battery of Artillery should be sent; but, as I have already stated, acting on military advice, the recommendation was not complied with.

Sir HENRY TYLER: I beg to ask the noble Marquess whether he has seen the report in *The Times* this day with respect to General Graham's Army in the Soudan, in which it says—

> "The heat was very great, and the troops suffered from want of water, especially the Naval Brigade and the Artillery, who dragged the guns through heavy sand for seven hours;"

and, whether that was not for want of a battery of Horse Artillery?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I have seen the statement; but until we receive a detailed account of the action that was fought on Friday last, I do not think it possible to give an opinion.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE INSPECTORS' RETURNS.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE (for Mr. Raikes) asked the Vice President of the Council, What number of the Returns of Her Majesty's Inspectors, embodying the results of the first examination of the schools they had visited last year, were sent back to them by the Department for revision; and, whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the instructions communicated by the Department to the Inspectors, when such Returns were sent back?

Mr. MUNDELLA: At the end of May last year, when the first month's Reports of examinations under the New Code had been received, it was found that in some districts some Inspectors had misinterpreted the "instructions" of the Department with respect to the mode of assessing the annual grant. In these cases the Reports were returned for reconsideration. Great part of those returned were sent back without being considered by the Department. There is no record of the exact number so returned. We should have been wanting alike in our duty, and in consideration for the schools, had we not, at the beginning of such a change of method, watched very narrowly the mode of its administration. The instructions were of the usual confidential character, and were not such as could be properly laid on the Table of this House.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—LORD MORLEY'S COMMITTEE.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any steps are being taken to carry out the recommendations of Lord Morley's Committee, as to the closer union of the Army Medical Department with the Army Hospital Corps?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that the recommendation referred to in the Question was one of a great many contained in the Report of Lord Morley's Committee, and he hoped in introducing the Army Estimates to be able to make a general statement with regard to the Report of that Committee; and he, therefore, thought it would be more convenient to defer any statement until then.

DYNAMITE OUTRAGES--LEGISLATION.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, with a view for the better protection of the public from criminal designs against life and property by the use of explosive agents, Her Majesty's Government have it under consideration to propose Legislation to Parliament giving greater powers to the Executive, and, in particular, powers for expelling from the United Kingdom all Foreign persons who may reasonably be suspected by the police of being concerned in the aforesaid designs?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: This is a matter, I need not say, which has engaged, and is engaging, the most anxious attention of Her Majesty's Government. Stringent directions have been given in reference to measures for detecting emissaries sent from abroad to commit these atrocious crimes. The House will see, probably, that it is better I should not at this moment state the nature of those measures. They are within the powers of the existing law; but if, in the judgment of the Government, they are not upon experiment found sufficient, the Government will not have any hesitation in asking the House for further powers. At the present moment they do not propose to ask for further powers.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state under what statute or power the Lord Lieutenant granted leave of absence to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, without the requirements of the Civil Service Regulations being complied with, viz. the production of a medical certificate to entitle Mr. Clifford Lloyd to such leave of absence; if he will state for what time the leave of absence has been granted; and, if it is a fact that Mr. Lloyd's name appears on the published list of Resident Magistrates, and in the first class?

Mr. TREVELYAN: A medical certificate is not requisite under the regulations of the Civil Service, unless the leave granted to the officer be sick leave, which allows pay. Leave without pay is often granted to Civil servants for their own private business, on due cause being shown to the Head of the Department, and still oftener is such leave granted for the benefit of some Colonial or Foreign Government. The leave granted to Mr. Lloyd was for six months, from the 15th of September last, and it is His Excellency's intention to extend it. Mr. Lloyd's name is retained on the list of Resident Magistrates in the first class.

IRELAND—ROMAN CATHOLIC LENTEN PASTORALS—THE BISHOP OF ELPHIN.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the following passage in the Lenten Pastoral addressed by the Catholic Bishop of Elphin to the clergy of his diocese:—

> "We have evidence, which we deeply deplore, that Freemason and Orange Lodges are actively at work in our midst, plotting the extermination of our people, fostering disunion, provoking outrages, in a word, undermining the very foundations of social order; and, what is most lamentable, those lodges are not only sanctioned but directed in their evil work by public officials, by Justices of the Peace—nay, even by Ministers of the Protestant Church;"

and, whether the Irish Executive will have regard to this statement in their conduct of the promised investigation into the Orange Society in Ireland?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Lenten Pastorals of Roman Catholic Bishops are not communicated to the Irish Government, nor have they any means of verifying what they may be stated to contain. Any specific statement from a Bishop, or any documentary evidence which is submitted bearing on the operations of the Orange Society in his diocese, of which he may desire to complain, will receive careful attention; but the Government cannot undertake to investigate the accuracy of general statements of opinion by any individual, however eminent.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES ACT.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the following paragraph in the published prospectus of a proposed Company is not contrary to the policy and provisions of the Acts for the regulation of Joint Stock Companies; and, if so, whether he will draw the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the attempts to avoid in this way the disclosure of premature contracts:—

> "The vendors and promoters have also entered into contracts in relation to the expenses of forming and floating the Company, and every applicant for shares shall be deemed to have waived the disclosure of all contracts other than those above specified (*i.e.* in previous paragraphs); and all applications for shares will be received and allotments made on the footing of no future question being raised, by reason of the omission to specify in the prospectus the dates and names of the parties to any contract?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The Companies Act, which requires the disclosure of all contracts in the prospectus of a Company, declares that their concealment shall be deemed fraudulent against persons who take shares on the faith of the prospectus. The non-publication of these contracts, therefore, is not a crime or public offence, so that there is no case for the intervention of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Any opinion I may give could only be for the benefit of two classes of persons—those who will not take shares in such a Company and those who will. Those who will not take shares do not require my advice; and those who will invest their money in such a Company must be possessed of an intellectual capacity which would render it difficult for them to appreciate any advice I may give. I am sure my hon. Friend is not likely to be among the latter class.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. J. YOUNG, J.P.

MR. O'BRIEN (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Richard Young, J.P. who lately signed the protest of the county Derry magistrates against the dismissal of Lord Rossmore, is the same Richard Young who was charged with drunkenness three times before the City of Derry magistrates, and on the last occasion was described as an "old offender," and fined forty shillings and costs; whether the Government were informed by the local authorities of these cases; whether, on a previous occasion, a magistrate was removed from the Commission of the Peace on being once fined before the same Bench for a like offence; and, whether the Government will allow to continue in office a magistrate, publicly charged as an "old offender," with the adjudication of cases of a similar character to that for which he has been so often fined?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the case of Mr. Young was a very deplorable one. He had been under restraint, and his health at present was in a very precarious condition. He had placed his resignation in the hands of the Lord Chancellor, and the circumstances that led to his ill-health were such as to make that step unavoidable. His resignation had nothing to do with signing the Rossmore protest. He was not in a condition to sign it, and it was done by his wife, who did not understand the matter, and was told that every other magistrate had signed it.

EGYPT—THE RED SEA LITTORAL—TAJURRAH.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, when Her Majesty's Government undertook to defend the Egyptian Ports on the Red Sea, they had taken into consideration that Tajurrah is an Egyptian Port on the Red Sea, but that France claims jurisdiction in regard to it; whether he can say if this pledge is to be regarded as an assurance that Her Majesty's Government will defend these Ports against all attack, or only against attacks on the part of the inhabitants of these Ports and of the surrounding country; and, whether the pledge is a temporary or a permanent one?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Tajurrah is outside the Red Sea, in the Gulf of Aden; but it is one of the Egyptian ports of which Her Majesty's Government have undertaken the protection for the present. They are aware that a claim is made by the French Government to Obokh; but it would not be advisable at present to make any further statement. Her Majesty's Government is not aware of the probability of any attack on the Red Sea ports, except by inhabitants of the surrounding country.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BOARD SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS).

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Vice President of the Council, If it is the fact that the School Board for London has issued precepts requiring contributions from St. George, Hanover Square, £56,251; St. James's, Westminster, £22,368; St. Martin's, £13,802; the Westminster district, £20,474; the Strand district, £14,673; St. Peter's, £80; or a sum in all for Westminster of £127,608, for the financial year 1884-5; and, if he will state what schools are maintained in Westminster by the School Board, how many school places are provided in them, and what has been the average attendance at each school during the past year?

MR. MUNDELLA: We have no record in the Education Department of the separate contributions of the various districts or parishes within a School Board district. The London School Board, however, informed me that the sums specified in the Question are practically correct. The Returns of provision and average attendance of the Board schools in Westminster, as supplied by the School Board, show seven schools with accommodation for 4,191 children, with 3,681 in average attendance during last year.

INLAND REVENUE—TOBACCO DUTIES.

MR. MACFARLANE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can explain upon what principle the Duty of four shillings and tenpence is levied upon Cavendish tobacco imported into this Country, while unmanufactured tobacco is only charged three shillings and sixpence and three shillings and tenpence according to the quantity of moisture contained in it?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid that it would be impossible, in the compass of an answer at Question time, to explain satisfactorily these differences. All I can say now is that, before the passing of the Manufactured Tobacco Act of 1863, the duty on Cavendish tobacco was 9*s.* per lb., and 5 per cent, so that the difference is much less now than formerly. There are four duties on different classes of manufactured tobacco—4*s.* 10*d.*, 4*s.* 4*d.*, 3*s.* 10*d.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* per lb.

STREET TRAFFIC (METROPOLIS)—PRIVATE GATES, BARS, &c. IN PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES—LEGISLATION.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of

Works, Whether it is his intention to bring in a Bill this year or next to abolish all private gates, bars, and posts which obstruct the public thoroughfares in the Metropolis, in accordance with the views expressed by the Home Secretary to a Deputation on the subject, to the effect that he was the best person to bring in such a Bill, and that it would have his approval?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to my hon. Friend, I may state that I am advised that such a Bill as he refers to would require the usual Notices to be given in November, and could not, therefore, be introduced this year. With regard to next year, I cannot undertake to commit the Metropolitan Board to any course of action. The matter has been at various times considered by the Board; but it raises large questions of compensation, and presents many points of difficulty.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—PROCLAMATION OF GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that General Gordon has issued a Proclamation at Khartoum, in which he states that—

> "I am forced against my will to send for British troops, who are now on the road, and will arrive in a few days. I shall severely punish all who will not change their conduct;"

and, whether British troops have been ordered to Khartoum, or are on their way thither? I also wish to ask, if the Government have received any confirmation of the unfavourable news that the political situation at Khartoum has become worse; and that if any disaster should overtake the 2,000 irregulars who have marched out against the enemy the place will certainly be lost?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: We have no information as to the latter Question. I must refer the hon. Member to the declaration made on the 23rd of last month by the Prime Minister, that the Government could not undertake, pending the time of full explanation, to make statements from day to day in regard to the language, steps, and views of General Gordon. British troops have not been ordered to Khartoum, and are not on their way thither.

Mr. Montague Guest

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GRAHAM'S INSTRUCTIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will now state to the House the instructions given to General Graham with regard to an advance from Trinkitat against the enemy?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have no objection now to give to the House the fullest information in my power as to the instructions sent by Her Majesty's Government to General Graham. The first instruction was contained in a Paper already before the House, from which, perhaps, I may read an extract. It is a telegram from the Adjutant General to General Officer Commanding in Egypt, dated 12th of February, and the following is the portion to which I refer:—

> "Force to be collected at Suakin, with the object, if possible, of relieving Tokar garrison if it can hold out; if not, of taking any measures necessary for defence of ports."

The telegram we have received from the General Officer Commanding at Cairo, and which will, no doubt, be laid on the Table, contains an account of all the steps taken in consequence of the telegram which I have just read. Among them is a Memorandum of the instructions given to General Graham, from which the following is an extract:—

> "After making all necessary arrangements for maintaining your base at Trinkitat and securing your line of communications between there and Tokar, you will advance at once to the latter place and withdraw the garrison and others who may wish to accompany them. You will then return with these to Trinkitat, and telegraph to head-quarters, Cairo, for further orders. In the event of your ascertaining beyond doubt before leaving Suakin that Tokar has fallen, you will remain stationary, and telegraph as above for further orders. You will adopt the same course at Trinkitat should undoubted information reach you there that Tokar has fallen, despatching at once to Suakin such force as you may consider sufficient to hold the forts there and maintain the security of that place."

On the 18th of February instructions were sent to Admiral Hewett to communicate, if possible, with the garrison at Tokar, and to inform them that they were about to be relieved by a British Force; also to give the Rebel Chiefs assembled near Tokar the same information, and also to intimate to them that, unless they desisted from the siege of that place, a British Force would be despatched to relieve it. The following telegram was received from Sir William Hewett on the 18th of February, dated:—

> "18th February, 11.5 P.M.: received 18th February 11.30 P.M. In reply to letters to Chiefs outside Tokar, stating that English intend to relieve garrisons and protect Suakin, he (Osman Digma?) coolly informs me, after quotations from Koran, that all those that did not believe in the Mahdi would meet same fate as others, and says that after Tokar falls he intends coming to Suakin, and turning all into Sea. I, therefore, do not intend sending any more messages."

On the 22nd of February the following telegram was received from General Graham:—

> Suakin, 22nd February, 1884.—Just arrived. Spies report that Civil Governor and commander of troops went to rebel camp Wednesday, and agreed to surrender on Thursday. Five men have come in from garrison, making same statement. Report of Tokar being actually surrendered not yet received. All preparations for landing at Trinkitat are, therefore, being pressed forward."

On the 23rd of February I telegraphed to the General Officer commanding in Egypt—

> "Telegraph following to General Graham. Assuming Tokar fallen, what course would you recommend? No sanction will be given for a distant expedition. Could you march to Teb, protect fugitives, bury English dead, and return by land to Suakin? If Suakin threatened you may take offensive, either from Trinkitat or Suakin. Report fully on position."

I had received no answer to that telegram on the 26th of February, on which day I sent the following further telegram to General Graham:—

> "Send news by every ship leaving Trinkitat of proceedings and prospects. Answer to my telegram of Saturday anxiously awaited. Tokar having fallen, the main object is now protection of Suakin from attack. Do not molest rebels if they disperse. Has Buller arrived?"

On the 27th I telegraphed again to General Graham, having received no reply to my telegram of Saturday, as follows:—

> "Have received no reply to mine of Saturday and Tuesday, but Consul reports advance intended Thursday. You should, if possible, summon Chiefs to disband forces, and attend Gordon at Khartoum for settlement of Soudan before attacking. Tell them we are not at war with Arabs, but must disperse force threatening Suakin."

On the 29th, which was Friday last, I received from General Graham a telegram despatched from Trinkitat, but not dated, and from Suakim, dated 29th February, 6.20 P.M. It was received here at 5.50 P.M., and was in these terms—

> "Telegram of 27th Febuary received. Am sending letter to outposts with white flag in accordance with instructions. Shall advance to Teb to-morrow, and not fight unless compelled to do so."

That is all I received until the telegrams from General Graham and from the Admiral, which have been published in the newspapers. I may, perhaps, add that there is no foundation whatever for the rumour which has found its way into some of the newspapers this morning, that instructions have been sent to General Graham ordering him immediately to withdraw from Tokar. A telegram has been received from General Graham this afternoon asking for instructions as to the disposal of the Egyptian men, women, and children, who are anxious to leave Tokar and to be sent to Trinkitat. Instructions have been sent to him with regard to that subject; but I think the same reason which induced me to be somewhat reticent as to the character of the instructions sent to General Graham before the happening of recent events would make it inexpedient that I should now go into details as to the additional instructions which have to-day been sent to General Graham.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: May I ask where General Gordon is now?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: His last telegram is dated from Tokar. Having had to make this somewhat lengthy statement to the House, I can hardly omit taking this, the earliest, opportunity of stating how much reason I think the Government and the country have to be satisfied with the arrangements which were made by the General Officer commanding the expedition, and the manner in which those arrangements were carried out by the Staff and everyone engaged, and also with the rapid and efficient organization of the expedition. I may also say how thoroughly judicious, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, were the dispositions made by General Graham, and how efficiently and admirably his instructions were carried out by the officers and men under his command

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I may, with the permission of the House, express on the part of, I am sure, the whole House the same sentiments which have been expressed by the noble Marquess with regard to this expedition. ["No, no!"] Having said that, I wish to ask the noble Marquess or the Prime Minister whether they can now inform the House as to the general principles on which they are now acting in regard to this business, and what are the intentions of Her Majesty's Government in the future? I do not ask for details which it may be inconvenient to give; but I think the House is entitled to information as to the general line of conduct.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think it would be impossible for me to say more at present than I have already said. The main and immediate object of the policy of the Government is, in the first place, to secure the safety of the remainder of the Egyptian garrison rescued at Tokar; and, in the next place, to provide for the safety of Suakin, which appears still to be threatened by a considerable force of rebels who are in its immediate vicinity. Until we receive fuller Reports from General Graham and Admiral Hewett, I do not think it would be possible for me to make any further statement on the subject.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: May I ask whether Her Majesty's Government have kept General Gordon informed as to what has been, and is, going forward in that part of the Soudan where General Graham is engaged?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: General Gordon has been kept constantly informed of everything that has taken place from Cairo.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the noble Marquess state to the House the date of the surrender of Tokar; and also how many Egyptian soldiers were found alive in the garrison?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In the telegram from General Graham, which has been published in the newspapers, it is stated that Tokar has been in possession of the rebels since the 16th of February.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: That is not correct.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: That is all the information we have received on the subject. General Gordon telegraphed this afternoon that he found in the garrison about 350 men of Egyptian origin, and probably about the same number of women and children, for whose removal he will have to make arrangements.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked whether the noble Marquess was able to state what were the contents of the letter which he had alluded to as having been sent by General Graham to Osman Digna and the Rebel Chiefs?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No, Sir; I do not know anything more on the subject than I have stated. General Graham states that he sent on the letter according to his instructions.

Mr. M'COAN: May I ask if any steps are to be taken to relieve the important garrison of Kassala?

[No reply.]

Mr. M'COAN: I will repeat the Question to-morrow.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—SPREAD OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

Mr. DUCKHAM asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether any inquiry has been made to ascertain the correctness of the report that the cargo of Herefords landed at Portland on the 2nd of February from the *Ontario*, contracted foot and mouth disease at Liverpool during their detention before embarkation; and, whether it is correct that the Veterinary Inspector at Portland has certified that they were free from the disease when they were landed?

Mr. DODSON: An inquiry has been made, in the course of which it was ascertained that the Herefords taken out on board the *Ontario* were untrucked at Liverpool in the Canada Dock Station of the London and North-Western Railway, the place in which the temporary cattle market was held while Stanley Market was closed. We have no information about the certificate of the Veterinary Inspector at Portland. The information in the telegram we received, dated Portland, February 19, was that some of the animals developed foot-and-mouth disease a day or two after landing in the quarantine ground at Deering. As the regulations of the United States authorities require animals that are found on landing to be diseased to be quarantined elsewhere than at the regular quarantine ground, it would appear that these animals did not show disease when landed.

PUBLICATION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS—PREMATURE DELIVERY TO THE PUBLIC PRESS.

MR. MAYNE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, By whose authority a copy of General Gordon's Proclamation was supplied to a portion of the London Press before any copies had been delivered to Members of the House; whether he can state why copies are supplied to only a few newspapers in London; and, whether he will see that, in future, the whole of the London Press and the Provincial Press, through the news agencies, are placed on the same footing with regard to Foreign Office communications?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: General Gordon's Proclamation was sent, by the authority of the Secretary of State, to a portion of the London Press, so that it should appear simultaneously with the delivery of the copies to the House. In regard to the second and third Questions of the hon. Member, they will be replied to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Question of the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the repeated instances, which have recently occurred, of the publication of official documents in the newspapers before they are distributed among honourable Members, he will take steps to secure that the Heads of Departments shall adopt some effectual measures to prevent such publication in future?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The First Lord of the Treasury has asked me to reply to this Question. Our attention has been drawn to cases of the premature publication in the newspapers of official documents about to be circulated to Members of Parliament, and a Treasury Minute on the subject will be prepared and communicated to the Heads of Departments suggesting a course of proceeding which will, I hope, put a stop to this irregularity in future. There is no evidence that the particular publication to which I presume the right hon. Gentleman refers was the act of anybody connected with Her Majesty's Government.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether the Treasury Minute referred to would be laid upon the Table?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes; I think so. I do not think there will be any objection to its publication.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked if it was not the case that copies of the Queen's Speech were placed at the disposal of the Press the day before Parliament met?

MR. GLADSTONE: Oh, dear no; nothing of the kind.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked that for several years the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting had appeared in the newspapers before it was placed in the hands of hon. Members.

ARMY—WOOLWICH ARSENAL—SURPLUS STORES—THE "REMAIN."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, If he will state the number of War Office officials employed upon the "remain" of stores now proceeding at Woolwich Arsenal; the nature and object of the work; the time within which it is expected to be finished; and the estimated cost of the service; and, whether any facilities will be given to the Comptroller and Auditor General to report to this House upon the scope and result of the stocktaking?

MR. BRAND: There are four War Office officials upon the "Remain" Committee at Woolwich Arsenal, and five members of the War Office have been employed as counting officers; but of these latter only one gentleman is now so employed. The nature and object of the work is to ascertain by actual counting that the stock of stores on hand corresponds with the ledger balances, and to establish a starting point from which it may be possible to organize a periodical valuation of each section. It is expected that the work will be finished by August next. The estimated cost of the service is £4,723 15*s*. The stocktaking at the Arsenal is a matter of store and not of cash account, and as such would not come under the cognizance of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUTHERN SOUDAN)—MR. LUPTON.

Sir **WILFRID LAWSON** asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Times* of February 29th, regarding the rule of Mr. Frank Lupton in the Southern Soudan, from which it appears that letters were sent to the Mahdi from Slattern Bey and other officers attached to Mr. Lupton's Government, making treacherous offers of joining the Mahdi; whether it is true that on the strength of the assurances contained in these letters 2,000 of the Mahdi's troops were induced to approach the walls of Dara, whereupon, when within a hundred yards of the walls, "cannon loaded to the muzzles with bullets" opened fire upon them, and five hundred were shot down; and, whether, if this statement be true, Her Majesty's Government has either the power or the intention of dealing in any way with Mr. Lupton with reference to this proceeding?

Lord **EDMOND FITZMAURICE**: No such information has been received at the Foreign Office, and Her Majesty's Government has no control over Mr. Lupton, who is Governor of the Bahr-el-Gazal Province, in the interior of the Soudan.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL—SLAUGHTER OF FOREIGN CATTLE.

Mr. **ARTHUR ARNOLD** asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the statement by Lord Camperdown, in *The Daily News* of the 28th ult., that under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill now before this House—

> "Foreign animals will no longer be slaughtered at the port of landing; either they will be allowed to land freely, or they will not be allowed to land at all,"

is accurate; and, if so, whether, considering that this will close the Foreign Animals Wharves, Her Majesty's Government will undertake that the Bill, so gravely affecting the supply of food for the people, shall not be brought forward at an hour when these provisions cannot receive full and adequate discussion?

Mr. **GLADSTONE**: I have not seen the words of Lord Camperdown's statement; but it is not strictly and absolutely, although substantially, accurate. With regard to the inferential part of the Question, what I have to say is this—that as the points to be raised, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, would be best discussed in the stage of Committee, and as there is a fair and just desire in all parts of the House that this matter should be settled as speedily as possible, I hope the hon. Member will accept the assurance that we will take care that time is really available for the discussion in Committee, and that the other stages may be allowed to be taken without considerable discussion.

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE—APPOINTMENT OF A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. **RYLANDS** asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the Resolution in favour of the Reduction of National Expenditure passed by the House on the 6th April 1883, and in accordance with the promise then given, the Government have seriously considered the proposal for the appointment of a Select Committee, or of more than one Committee, for the purpose of opening up to the full consideration of the House the whole arrangements of the Public Expenditure, and of reporting upon the measures to be conducted for the relief of the Country from any part of the existing Expenditure by economies which would not be detrimental to the Public Services?

The **CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Mr. Childers): I have been asked by my right hon. Friend to answer this Question. My hon. Friend will remember that on his Motion last Session the Prime Minister indicated that if the House showed any inclination for the appointment of one or more Committees for the review of the Public Expenditure, Her Majesty's Government would favourably view such an arrangement. It has not, however, yet appeared that the House was anxious for such Committee or Committees, and none was appointed last Session. It was, however, decided that in the Recess I should collect the fullest information possible as to the growth of the different branches of the National Expenditure, and that I should then, with the assistance of the Secretary to the Treasury and the other officers of the Treasury, meet each Head of Department in turn who accounts for the several Votes, and discuss carefully with him and his subordinates the items of Expenditure. I devoted a considerable portion of the Recess to this examination, and the results will appear in some of the Estimates, and in the explanations which we shall be able to give when they are discussed in Committee of Supply. I propose to pursue this examination during the current year, and I hope that it will have been completed before the Session of 1885. Under these circumstances, I should deprecate the appointment at present of any Select Committee to conduct a similar examination; but I think it well worth consideration whether next year such Committees of Review may not be found valuable.

NATIONAL EDUCATION — PARISHES WITHOUT PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. R. H. PAGET asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether in the case of a parish having no public Elementary School, but the educational requirements of which are presumably fulfilled by the fact that every part of such parish lies within two miles of the voluntary public Elementary Schools of its neighbours, such parish can, in any way, be compelled to contribute towards the expenses of the schools in which its children are educated; and, whether the neighbouring parishes are under any legal obligation to receive the children of such parish?

Mr. MUNDELLA: If the voluntary schools of a parish have room to spare, their managers must admit any children from other parishes who present themselves for admission, and the parishes from which the children come are not under any legal obligation to contribute. Contribution can only be enforced when there is a deficiency of accommodation, and in the supposed case there is no deficiency, there being a surplus of accommodation in the neighbouring voluntary schools; but it is not unusual where one parish avails itself of voluntary schools of another parish that some pecuniary compensation is made.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE RIOTS AT LONDONDERRY — REPORT OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether and when the Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the events in Londonderry on the 1st November last will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Derry Report will certainly be laid on the Table of the House, and I hope at an early date.

IRELAND—THE ORANGE SOCIETY— LODGE MEETING AT LISBURN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can give any information as to the nature of the proceedings detailed in the following paragraph, extracted from *The Lisburn Standard* of 23rd February—

> "Lisburn Star of the West, No. 17, Royal Black Encampment, Knights of Malta, held their usual monthly meeting in the Orange Hall, Railway Street, on Tuesday evening, February 19th, 1884. Sir Knight and Brother Richard Belshaw, jun., presided in the absence of the commander; Sir Knight and Bro. Francis Crowe, generalissimo, in the vice-chair. The encampment was opened in form by prayer and reading a portion of Scripture, the minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed, roll of members called, when three candidates were proposed for next night, after which nine Sir Knights volunteered to take out the warrant of Olive Branch, No. 13, Knights of Malta, granted; resolved, that the Sir Knights of No. 17, Royal Black Encampment, meet in Mrs. Pelan's, Bridge Street, on Tuesday evening, February 26th, at 7 p.m. sharp, for the purpose of going to the country to start the Olive Branch;"

whether he can inform the House of the functions and powers of the "generalissimo" and "commander" in question; and, whether he is aware of the object of the expedition undertaken on Tuesday last, when the Sir Knights of No. 17, Royal Black Encampment, assembled at 7 p.m. "to go into the country and start the Olive Branch?"

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that, so far as he had been able to ascertain, the functions of a "generalissimo" were analogous to those of a chairman of a meeting. The object of the expedition, he supposed, was the establishment of a branch lodge, the name of which, he hoped and trusted, might be taken as an indication of the peaceful intentions of its promoters. [Mr. Gibson: Hear, hear!]

CENTRAL ASIA—ANNEXATION OF MERV BY RUSSIA—HERAT.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the following telegram from the Vienna correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*—

> "It is reported that the English Government intends to reply to the annexation of Merv by taking important measures for the protection of Herat. The English garrison at Quettah, it is said, will be reinforced, the Indian Railroad over Sibi will be prolonged to Quettah, and eventually to Candahar, and Russia will be given to understand that England considers Herat to be within the sphere of her protection, while the authorities at Herat are to be warned that England will not tolerate Foreign interference of any kind"—

correctly indicates the steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take in view of the annexation of Merv by Russia?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The hon. Member for Greenwich asks whether a certain course of action, attributed to Her Majesty's Government by the Vienna Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, correctly indicates the steps which Her Majesty's Government intend to take in view of the annexation of Merv by Russia? On the 22nd of February, the President of the Local Government Board stated, on behalf of the Government, and in reply to the hon. Member for Mid Lincoln (Mr. E. Stanhope), that the matter was now the subject of diplomatic communications, and that it was not possible for the Government to speak in detail upon it at the present time. He also drew attention to the engagements entered into with the Ameer in 1880, and reiterated in 1883, by which, on certain conditions, we undertake to aid the Ameer in repelling unprovoked aggression on his Dominions, of which Herat forms a part. I hope the hon. Gentleman will agree with me in thinking that the means by which these engagements are to be fulfilled must rest with Her Majesty's Government.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS.

Mr. R. H. PAGET asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, When he proposes to issue the consolidated Order setting forth the regulations now in force under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, which was promised during the last Session of Parliament; and, whether he will consider the propriety of the issue of an order authorising local authorities to prevent, as far as practicable, animals affected with foot and mouth disease from drinking at running streams?

Mr. DODSON: The consolidated Orders were gazetted on February 12. Considerable delay occurred in printing the Orders. They are now being issued as fast as possible. We have carefully considered the suggestion described in the second Question; but the subject appears to be attended with difficulties, both legal and practical, and we do not at present see our way to make an Order for the purpose.

INDIA—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER—THE QUETTA RAILWAY.

Mr. ONSLOW asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government had given any further instructions for the prosecution of the Quetta Railway?

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, that the matter was the subject of communication between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India. The Prime Minister gave an answer to this Question on Friday, and he had nothing further to add.

Mr. BOURKE asked when Papers on the subject would be laid upon the Table?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied, that it was impossible to fix any particular date for the production of the Papers.

Mr. BOURKE said, the Papers he referred to were Papers which had been alluded to several times this Session. He asked whether any Correspondence had taken place between the Indian Government and the Ameer? Those were the Papers he asked for, and perhaps the noble Lord would say when they would be presented.

Mr. J. K. CROSS asked that the Question might be put another day.

BULGARIA—THE VARNA RAILWAY—THE PAPERS.

Mr. DIXON - HARTLAND asked, How soon the Papers with regard to the Varna Railway would be laid on the Table of the House, as the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) refused to answer a Question of his on Friday till they were so laid; and, also, if he would state whether negotiations had been broken off to-day, and that two of the Delegates had given notice that they leave the country on Wednesday? If that was so, what course did the Government propose to take?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, he was anxious to present those Papers as soon as possible. He asked that Notice should be given by the hon. Member of his further Question.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—OPERATION IN DONEGAL.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter, in *The Derry Journal* of the 25th February, from the parish priest of Gweedore, in Donegal, complaining that the powers of the Tramways Act are being exercised in the interest of the landlord class; that congested and impoverished districts will not be relieved by the projects now under consideration; and that, in particular,

> "Instead of the available influence being used for the benefit of the poor and starving tenantry of Gweedore and other such localities, the whole landlord power of north-western Donegal is concentrated on forcing a line of Railway to the hall doors of the only two resident landlords in the district;"

whether he has considered that the predominant part assigned to county Grand Juries, under the Tramways Act, seriously jeopardise the interests of the bulk of the populations; and, whether Government propose to amend the Tramways Act by a measure giving efficient authority to representatives of the ratepayers?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen the letter referred to in the Question of the hon. Gentleman. The Government has no authority to interfere as to the particular part of a county through which proposed lines may be intended to run, and cannot prejudge the action of the Grand Juries with regard to the several schemes which may be brought before them. After the schemes have been decided upon by the Grand Juries, and when the cases come before the Privy Council, any 20 ratepayers, representing one-eighth of the liability to the county cess, can present a Petition against the scheme, and can be heard. The Government does not propose to alter the Act.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—MILITARY EXPEDITION TO ASSOUAN.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, there are two Questions which I wish to put to Her Majesty's Government. One is, whether there is any truth in the report that British troops have been sent to Assouan; and, if so, for what purpose they have been sent there? The other Question is, whether the Government cannot now give us some information in regard to the position of General Gordon? There is considerable anxiety in the public mind in consequence of the reports which have been received. Those reports appear to be rather conflicting, and I think, considering the time which has elapsed, it is but reasonable that we should have some information from the Government on the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the first Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I can only state that we have received information that a brigade, I think—at any rate a body—of the Egyptian Army has been sent to Assouan. General Stephenson has received instructions, if Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Government should think it necessary, to send a British force to some point up the Nile in support of that force. We have also telegraphed a request that in the event of their having been sent, the fullest information should be transmitted as to the destination and composition of the force; but I have not heard that any orders on the subject have yet been issued.

MR. GLADSTONE: In regard to General Gordon, I do not know what it is that the right hon. Gentleman refers to. Her Majesty's Government have received no disquieting rumours about General Gordon. He is in constant telegraphic communication with Cairo, and if there were anything of a disquieting character I cannot conceive but that it must necessarily have reached the Government. I believe that General Gordon still remains at Khartoum, and we have no reason to suppose that he contemplates leaving it at present.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether it is true that Colonel Stewart has returned from the White Nile, having failed in the expedition on which General Gordon had sent him, having been met by large bodies of threatening Natives; whether it is or is not true that General Gordon is about to despatch, or has already despatched, Colonel Stewart again up the White Nile, at the head of 2,000 Black troops, to wage war on the Mahdi; if he will explain to the House whether General Gordon's mission still remains essentially pacific; and if, in these circumstances, he will further explain why British troops have been ordered up to Assouan?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think the noble Lord will feel it is but reasonable that Notice should be given of a serious Question of that kind.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us why these troops have been ordered to Assouan? They must be ordered there for some purpose. Is it in consequence of the communications which have come from General Gordon that these troops have been sent? The noble Lord said the troops were ordered by the Egyptian Government; but is it not the British Government that is really and practically responsible?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; these troops were not ordered in consequence of any communication from General Gordon; and the movement, if it takes place, has no relation whatever to any operations of General Gordon.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will give a pledge to the House that General Gordon shall not be permitted to wage war on the Soudanese tribes at the head of 2,000 Bashi-Bazouks?

Mr. GLADSTONE: This is really putting a series of the strangest Questions. I am asked to deny the statements they contain one after the other. The noble Lord should show that he has some colour of authority for such astonishing statements.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: They are in every newspaper.

ADJOURNMENT—(THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—RULE 2).

EGYPT — STATE OF AFFAIRS, AND POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT, IN THE SOUDAN.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Member for Carlisle, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., the state of affairs, and policy of the Government, in the Soudan; but, the pleasure of the House not having been signified,

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member proposes to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, in order to discuss the state of affairs and the policy of the Government in the Soudan. Is it your pleasure that leave be given?

Not less than Forty Members having accordingly risen in their places,

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, that, in his opinion, it would have been discreditable to the House, in the serious circumstances in which they now stood, if, after the events of Friday last in the Soudan, they had declined to discuss the present situation. On Friday certain military operations took place in the Eastern Soudan, and it was stated in to-day's newspapers that some 2,000 lives had been taken away. Surely the House could do nothing better than discuss why that slaughter of men in their own country had occurred. Surely the House was entitled to know what the policy of Her Majesty's Government was, and what was the reason why they were carrying fire and sword among people who had never done us any harm. Personally, he felt that he was entitled to demand an explanation from the Government. The House would remember what took place on the Vote of Censure. The Prime Minister came down to the House and said distinctly that the military forces would be employed solely as a small service to humanity; and he and his Friends near him understood the right hon. Gentleman to mean that the forces were to be employed for the rescue of the garrison of Tokar and nothing else. Within 10 days after the Prime Minister made that declaration and gave them that assurance Tokar fell and the garrison surrendered. Where was now the service to humanity? There was nothing more to be done; and if the Prime Minister had told them in that debate that he was going on further, that he was not going merely to rescue the garrison of Tokar, and that he was going to invade the country of these people, whose independence he had declared, he would not have got the votes of some of the Members who sat below the Gangway. If this terrible slaughter had been carried on for any other purpose than the relief of Tokar the Prime Minister and the Government had obtained the votes of those hon. Members under false pretences. He supposed an attempt would be made by the Government to show that the slaughter on Friday was carried on as a means of defending Suakin. That was an insult to our troops, and he scorned the plea, by whomsoever it might be put forward; but he supposed it was the only excuse the Government could make. No human being in this or in any other country would believe in that defence. It might, however, do in that House; it might do for the time. He dared say that some of his hon. Friends would assume to believe it; but it would only be a "make-believe" belief. What was the action of Friday last fought for? All the newspapers in London said it was fought in order to give a lesson to the rebels, to show our own power, and to maintain our military reputation. But he would say that a more dastardly and cowardly deed had never been done than the commission of this massacre. Long ago, when there was an attempt to carry on a war with Russia for the sake of getting some further military successes, the Prime Minister said—

> "Now, I venture to say, with deep respect, and without imputing motives to hon. Gentlemen who allow such a sentiment to find a place within their breasts, that if they will put down passion and look at it with the calm eye of reason, they would see it is not only indefensible, it is hideous, it is anti-Christian, it is immoral, it is inhuman, and you have no right to make war for what you call success. If, when you have obtained the objects of a war, you continue it in order to obtain military glory, I say you tempt the justice of Him in whose hands the fate of armies is solely lodged—you tempt Him to launch on you His wrath. If this be courage, I, for one, have no courage to take such a course."

These were noble words, and the right hon. Gentleman acted in a noble manner a few years ago when our troops were repulsed. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman came to the conclusion that the war was unjust, and wrote a memorable letter, in which he said that to go on in such a proceeding would be sheer blood-guiltiness. Now, because it was possible that we might be laughed at if our troops came back without a contest, we have committed an unspeakable crime for fear of being called cowards. It was as clear as daylight how the thing had gone on. The Cabinet, yielding to all this military clamour, had cut down thousands of men who were doing nothing more than defending their homes and their country. The whole thing was clearly explained now. The articles they had read this morning showed that the whole of the proceedings was nothing more than mowing down by machinery men who had done us no harm, and who were "butchered to make a Jingo holiday." Their bodies were festering on the desert sands; but the blood of those men cried for judgment upon the nation which committed such crimes and such cruelties, and committed them for the lowest and basest object; for all those attempts upon Egypt had ultimately been based upon a desire to get money. That was the reason which justified him in moving the adjournment of the House. When he came down to the House, he had been told that there was no use in moving the adjournment of the House, because there were orders for the troops to come back. But they had since heard a very different story. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for War had told them that the troops had not been recalled. Therefore, there was every reason to suppose that other atrocities would be committed. Surely the Government had done enough. Surely their foreign policy had gained enough glory, and incurred for it enough infamy. It had been said that our foreign policy of late years had been marked by massacres like milestones on the road. They began at Alexandria; there was a slaughter there. A few months elapsed, and then Tel-el-Kebir followed, with a brutal butchery of men who were unable to defend themselves. Then they had just heard of men, fighting with a bravery unequalled in ancient or modern history, mown down by modern implements of destruction. He asked the Prime Minister whether he could not check this country in its wild career of crime. He did not say that the course which had been followed was unpopular. He was afraid that all that slaughter of weak and helpless people was not unpopular in the country. It was popular enough with all those pliant scribes who cried out for the slaughter of men much braver and better than themselves. It was popular with the monied classes—with the financiers, who were at the bottom of all the business. It was, too, popular with Gentlemen there—even those who sat below the Gangway—the Radicals in that House. He thought it well to speak the truth, even in that House, sometimes. They were Radicals in name; but he told his hon. Friends that if there was one class upon whom the guilt and responsibility of all this work rested more heavily than upon another it was the Radical Party. They were still Radicals in name; but he sometimes thought they had changed their nature. At one time they were called the Peace-at-any-price Party—now they might be called the War-at-any-price Party. He was not speaking with any force of numbers behind him. He appealed to a higher authority than popular support. The right hon. Gentleman knew that there was a higher Court than the High Court of Parliament, before which those deeds would some day be brought for judgment. He, for one, would on that day rather be in the position of those poor savages who were mown down by our soldiers than in the position of those who dealt death and destruction among them. He hoped the Prime Minister would turn a deaf ear to those evil counsellors who had hitherto been able to lead him, and once more act upon those principles of truth and peace and justice, for which he had so often and so eloquently pleaded, and prove, by withdrawing our troops, that this nation could be merciful as well as strong. He called upon the right hon. Gentleman to sheathe the sword and spare mankind.

Mr. PASSMORE EDWARDS said, he begged to second the Motion of the hon. Baronet.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir Wilfrid Lawson.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: I confess, after the manifestations we have had of sentiment on the other side of the House, I could have wished to have had the advantage of hearing from leading Gentlemen on the opposite side with what motives they supported the Motion of my hon. Friend (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). I quite understand the motive of my hon. Friend, and, however violent his language may be, however sweeping his condemnations upon this and many other subjects, he well knows that I have never used towards him a single phrase except of mildness and respect. That is not on account of the tone of his speeches; but on account of the sacredness of the object he has in view. I wish him now to understand that he is at liberty to discharge upon me and my Colleagues all the vials of wrath he may please to pour out, to make against us the most extravagant assumptions, to put out of view the evidence upon which we have acted, and, in fact, to commit every illogical and argumentative offence that he may please; but for me he is perfectly secure on account of the sacredness of the object he has in view. The indisposition, under all circumstances, to the shedding of human blood, the consistent profession of what may, perhaps, be an ultra-pacific policy, have been the motives which have led my hon. Friend to-night to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House. Am I to understand that concurrence in these motives of my hon. Friend prompted other hon. Gentlemen to support the Motion. [Lord Randolph Churchill: Certainly.] I quite admit that the noble Lord's rising was in entire conformity with many expressions which had fallen from him. I am apologizing for my own delay, because, naturally, I was desirous to know the whole of the case we had to meet, and not the case only as it has been presented by my hon. Friend. I am disappointed in that respect; and, therefore, I have to deal with the case of my hon. Friend. My hon. Friend has taken pains to quote some opinions of mine, given in former debates, one of them, I think, 30 years ago, and another of a more recent date, but still not of a very recent character. I do not know whether I am or am not responsible for the precise words of the quotations; but as regards their substance, I adopt them, and hold by them now, as strictly and as closely as I did when I made use of those expressions. As far as I understand my hon. Friend, he has stated two definite points against the Government; but his speech is founded on a general assumption over and above these two points. His first is that, in addressing the House upon the Vote of Censure, I stated that the relief of the beleaguered garrison was the sole object of the advance to be made by the military expedition for Suakin. That is quite true; but at the time I stated that, be it remembered that the House was, from the first, in the fullest possession of our declaration, that we intended to defend Suakin. It was actually on the day after the House met that, spontaneously, not in answer to a Question, I said that we were taking measures to strengthen the forces of Admiral Hewett for the defence of Suakin. At the time we had no reason to suppose that Suakin was likely to be attacked by any except the most insignificant force; and for all that we then knew, the naval means, which were placed, and which were being placed at the disposal of Admiral Hewett, might have sufficed for the purpose. Since then the case has assumed a different aspect; but I wish the House to understand that, in the first instance, when I said the military expedition was for the relief of the beleaguered garrison, the House was already aware of our intention with regard to Suakin, and that there was no abandonment of this intention. The rest of my hon. Friend's evidence appears to consist of certain articles in newspapers. I do not know what papers they are; but I gather the drift of the evidence from the general spirit of what he has read. But he has not shown, or attempted to show, that one word used by my noble Friend near me, or myself, or Lord Granville, or by any Member of the Government, is in conformity with the spirit of those articles. It is very hard, in these circumstances, that my hon. Friend should bring these severe imputations against us. What is the real basis of my hon. Friend's charge? The real basis is this—that we have been engaged, or are going to be engaged, in what may be called vindictive military operations—punishing these people with no object of necessity in view; but in order either to indulge our own thirst for blood, or else to acquire military glory. Now, my hon. Friend has not produced one shred or tittle of evidence in support of this charge. I do not believe that the operation for the relief of Tokar would have been effected without fighting the action which has just taken place. We have relieved Tokar. We have not made it an object at any time to secure military possession of Tokar; but we have relieved all that portion of the military garrison of Tokar which had not joined the rebel forces. I repeat that this relief could not possibly have been effected without fighting the action that has been actually fought. Therefore, the action which my hon. Friend denounces as massacre was an action necessary for a purpose in which he has himself acquiesced. Under these circumstances, I do not know why he falls with such vehemence upon the Government, and upon Members of the House who do not think with him. But, besides the relief of Tokar, there was the defence of Suakin. Does my hon. Friend say we should give up the defence of Suakin? If he does, let him say so plainly. [Sir WILFRID LAWSON: We ought to get out of the place as quickly as we can.] The House has never expressed that opinion. Gentlemen on this side of the House do not entertain it, Gentlemen on that side do not entertain it, and the Government do not entertain it; and why? Not because they are given to vindictive military operations—operations which, under almost all circumstances, are odious and indefensible—but because they deem that the interests of peace and the interests of humanity require that the Port of Suakin should be maintained. My hon. Friend differs from this view, and differs, I presume, in the interests of peace and philanthropy. But would peace and philanthropy be promoted by our abandonment of Suakin? My hon. Friend says that we ought to get out of Suakin as quickly as we can. Well, I am inclined to concur with him; but in adopting the words "as quickly as we can," I mean as quickly as we can compatibly with the fulfilment of our duties to the cause of peace and humanity. If my hon. Friend says that we ought not to remain at Suakin for the establishment of British power there I agree with him. But if we abandoned Suakin at this moment it would be the opening of the greatest vent of the Slave Trade. The Slave Trade seeks a vent across the Red Sea to Arabia; and I do not hesitate to say, in the first place, that it would be the opening up of the country for the Slave Trade, and that event would become perfectly free and uninterrupted were we at this moment to abandon Suakin without making any provision for its prevention. Then my hon. Friend seems to forget that there is a strong political sympathy between those who are taking part in the movement headed by the Mahdi in the Soudan and a large number of tribes in Arabia; and my hon. Friend proposes that we should at once leave open the communications between the tribes in arms in the Soudan and the tribes who, according to the best judgment which we can form, are but too likely ready to take up arms in Arabia. Let my hon. Friend raise the question if he likes—that Her Majesty's Government are in error in declining to order the immediate abandonment of Suakin. [Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Will you give me a day?] I do not think that question is quite worthy of an answer. My hon. Friend puts that question to a man who he knows cannot give him an affirmative answer—a man charged with heavy political responsibilities. If my hon. Friend thinks fit, let him bring the subject forward, and then we shall see whether the state of the question is such as to justify his demand for a day. Am I to remind my hon. Friend of the telegrams that have been read to the House by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War? My noble Friend has read a telegram, dated February 23, in which he says—"No sanction will be given for a distant expedition." That means a distant expedition in contrast with the expedition for the relief of Tokar. The noble Lord goes on—

> "Could you march to Teb, protect fugitives' bury English dead, and return by land to Suakin?"

Is that a bloodthirsty purpose?

> "If Suakin threatened, you may take offensive, either from Trinkitat or Suakin."

Then, when we had a discussion on this subject a few days ago—we now have debates on Egypt on every other day—we stated distinctly that there might be movements which would be offensive in their military form, but which in their essence and aim would be defensive. That is the view of my noble Friend, and that is the view of the Government. Does my hon. Friend challenge that particular proposal? It is singular that after hearing all the fairly explicit declarations made by my noble Friend my hon. Friend has not challenged one of them. Does my hon. Friend think it unreasonable that if Suakin were threatened a British Force should protect it? My hon. Friend said in his speech just now rather mildly—it was one of the few sentences of his speech that did not contain a highly inflamed epithet—"You can remain at Suakin, and repel them when they come there." Does my hon. Friend think that would really serve the cause of peace to remain there behind such fortifications as there are at Suakin, to remain indefinitely, and as long as these tribes might choose to hang about that district in a menacing attitude? I can hardly think that my hon. Friend thinks that. I know pretty well what would be thought from the point of view of military honour apart from humane and politic objects, and I know what would be said in this House if we were to tell General Graham—"You may remain behind your mud walls in Suakin, and you must wait until your opponents fire at you, and if they do so you can fire back at them." That is the policy of my hon. Friend, but it is not a policy conformable with justice. My noble Friend also read a second telegram, in which he said—

> "Tokar having fallen, the main object is now the protection of Suakin from attack. Do not molest rebels if they disperse."

Where is the sanguinary declaration to which my hon. Friend objects? He thinks that to allow any amount of organized forces to remain near Suakin would have been, on our part, a proper course; but he objects to my noble Friend's conduct because he says—"Do not molest the rebels if they disperse." Then there was a third telegram—

> "You should, if possible, summon Chiefs to disband forces and attend Gordon at Khartoum for settlement of Soudan before attacking."

That was sent on February 27. Thus General Graham was ordered to send a notification that our mission was a mission of peace, and to require that the tribes should desist from threatening us by gathering in the neighbourhood. [Lord R. CHURCHILL: What was the date of that telegram?] The 27th February. But that was only, I must say, a more particular specification of what I conceive to have been involved in the whole of General Graham's instructions, all of which were framed on a basis totally incompatible with the thought of vindictive operations. That was the last declaration of my noble Friend. Then came the answer of General Graham—

> "I am sending letter to outpost with white flag in accordance with instructions. Shall advance to Teb to-morrow, and shall not fight until compelled to do so."

Much as I admire the skill and valour of General Graham and the admirable conduct of his forces in this operation, I admire yet more these few simple words, which show that he was not under the domination of a thirst for military glory, and that he abhorred vindictive operations just as utterly as does my hon. Friend. I think I have now met the points raised by my hon. Friend, and shown how completely the ground which I have taken up with regard to this subject is in accordance with the citations made by my hon. Friend from former speeches of mine which he has done me the honour to read.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman appears to be surprised that he should be frequently called upon to speak in this House on the affairs of Egypt. I think the House will not share that surprise. The position which we have taken up throughout these transactions is that the conduct of the Government with reference to the affairs of Egypt has been marked by an absence of consistency and steadiness, which has been the cause of a great part of the misfortunes which have occurred, and from all that we can see the same fault that has vitiated their policy hitherto can be traced in their policy now. It appears to us that there is a want of decision and firmness in their action, and they hesitate to make clear the position which they intend to occupy in Egypt; and so long as that position is left undefined, so long will there be openings for lamentable occurrences like those which have recently been seen. I was very much struck with the statement which appears in to-day's newspapers as having been made by some of the prisoners who were taken in the late encounter. They said they were not aware that they were fighting against the English—that they had no wish to fight against the English. Why, there is the reproach against Her Majesty's Government at once. If those people had known that they were fighting against English troops, if the position of England had been such as it ought to have been, if that position had been made clear, we should have had none of that slaughter which has taken place. I say, then, that it is our duty, in season and out of season, to call attention to this matter, and to press upon the Government to tell the world more distinctly than they have hitherto done how far they acknowledge their responsibility in Egypt. We see now what has come of their disclaiming responsibility, when not any action even, but a few words on the part of Her Majesty's Government, would have prevented the difficulties which have followed upon the destruction of Hicks Pasha's Army. We now perceive a new development of the same policy; and therefore I see without any surprise the hon. Baronet rise to call attention to the matter—the hon. Baronet who, having supported the Government in the recent debate, now anxiously, keenly, and with considerable feeling, watches all the proceedings flowing from the conduct which he, with others, has approved. I hope, therefore, we shall not be satisfied with what seem to me to be slight, temporary, and unworthy excuses. The right hon. Gentleman says it was necessary to preserve our hold upon Suakin for the present, in order to keep down the Slave Trade. Why for the present? [MR. GLADSTONE: They were not my words.] The gist of the right hon. Gentleman's argument was—and I believe it was so understood generally—that they were not contemplating any permanent occupation of Suakin, but that it was important that for the present time we should maintain ourselves there for that particular purpose—to put down the Slave Trade. If he had said it was necessary to remain there until certain forces were dispersed we could have understood him. But when that sort of language to which I have referred is used it is impossible for anyone to understand the position. The right hon. Gentleman can always explain his words in this House, but it is not so easy to explain them in Egypt, and anyone who knows the state of feeling in Cairo will know that there they are utterly bewildered. The right hon. Gentleman gave another reason for remaining at Suakin for the present. He said that the Mahdi in the Soudan is closely connected with the Arabian tribes, and that communication between them may lead to lamentable results. But what are we doing with regard to the Mahdi? Are we his friends or are we his enemies? We are fighting his lieutenant with our left hand, and with our right we are proclaiming him Sultan. Therefore, I say it is nearly impossible for this House, with any due sense of its duty to the country, to abstain, whenever opportunities occur, from pressing the Government to tell us what their policy is, and to take up a clear position. There is, of course, a difference between the position of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and hon. Gentlemen on this side. But the hon. Baronet will, I believe, agree with me in this—that the conduct of the Government has brought about a position from which it is impossible for us to extricate ourselves without violence, and that that conduct deserves censure. It is in the interest of humanity that we desire and endeavour to impress upon them the importance of taking up a position which may prevent future calamities.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Sir, for the Government to sit silent after the speech just delivered by the Leader of the Opposition is to plead guilty. There has been absolutely no reply to the right hon. Gentleman. He has asked them once more, for the hundredth time since Parliament met, to make a clear statement of the Government policy. That is the demand which the Opposition makes. But it is not only the demand which the Opposition makes; it is the demand which the whole country makes—which the whole of Europe makes. What are you doing in Egypt? What do you intend to do? It is in the power of hon. Members on this side—and I believe they will receive support from hon. Members opposite—to insist upon an answer from Her Majesty's Government. It is in our power to exercise control over the proceedings of this House. In spite of the regulations of the right hon. Gentleman, minorities are not altogether impotent. Her Majesty's Government are not only spending immense sums of money on military operations, but they shrink from bringing forward the Estimates with regard to those operations, and any appeals on the subject from their own side they meet with an absolute and inviolable silence. Let the House recollect the indignation of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues at the policy of the late Government, and the imprecations which, at the most critical times, the right hon. Gentleman showered down, because, as he said, the late Government did not give full information. You are now in occupation of Egypt, and, in part, of the Soudan; you are committing the country to Heaven knows what, and no power on earth can extract information from you. What is the policy of the Government? That is the question the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) asked, and I hope he will continue to ask it. I was surprised, when the hon. Baronet rose to move the adjournment, to notice that only two other Members of the Radical Party rose to support it. After a battle, without exception the bloodiest which this country has fought for years, a battle absolutely unprovoked except by Her Majesty's Government, the Representatives of the Radical Party in this House positively let the only sincere man among them stand up alone. I have said in the country, and I will say over and over again, that the Radical Party is humbug. Could I desire a stronger proof of that assertion than the conduct of the Radical Party to-night? Where, I should like to know, after this frightful slaughter, is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), the apostle of peace? Ah! he stood at that door; he looked in for a moment, he saw the subject was an awkward one, and he ran away. I should like to know where is the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard)? Ah! the hon. Member is there. Was he in the House when the hon. Baronet stood up to call attention to this subject? ["Question!"] I say it is in the right of any Member of the Opposition, at a moment like this, to call the attention of the country, in every possible way, to the attitude of those who demand its confidence. The hon. Member for Merthyr was there, the President of the Peace Society, who wishes to settle all matters of dispute by arbitration, and who a short time ago made an appeal to the Prime Minister to do so; and yet he did not get up to support the hon. Baronet when it was a question of the most ruthless slaughter brought about by Her Majesty's Government. Let Her Majesty's Government explain why they thought proper to censure the late Government in the strongest terms for the expedition to Zululand, which was undertaken for the purpose of protecting a British

Colony, and why they themselves, having pronounced that censure in terms which, I venture to say, were often more than un-Parliamentary, attacked the Arab Chief in the Soudan—with whose master they have made peace — although there was no British Colony, no British station to protect, but only a post which you admit you are going to abandon. Will Her Majesty's Government explain why they thought proper to make peace with the Transvaal Boers, after having sustained three disgraceful defeats, after having sacrificed a thousand or more British lives, and after having incurred more disgrace than any British Government ever incurred before? You made no attempt to retrieve those reverses, and yet now, for no object whatever, you make an absolutely unprovoked attack upon this Arab Chief, slaughtering with your superior weapons 1,000 or more of his followers. Will you explain that inconsistency in your policy, because it is an explanation which the country is demanding from you? Now I will point out the hypocrisy of the Government; now I come to this flag of truce. I asked the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War on Tuesday whether General Graham had power to negotiate with Osman Digna, and he told me that he supposed he had the usual powers which British Generals possessed. I had to be content with that reply; but it is quite clear now that he had no power to negotiate with Osman Digna, because on Wednesday the Government despatched a telegram to General Graham, instructing him to enter into negotiations. Now, what are these negotiations? Observe the way in which the Government have been endeavouring to blind not only their own eyes, but also the eyes of the country. A British officer—a gallant officer, no doubt—is sent out with a message, in all probability written in English, which he sticks in the sand two or three miles from the fortifications, and then retires, and the Government considers that it has done all that is necessary to enter into negotiations. The Government, after having satisfied the demands of humanity by this extraordinary and ridiculous course of action, proceed with perfect equanimity to slaughter Osman Digna's forces. General Graham is not responsible to this House except that he is acting under the instructions of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, and he merits nothing but thanks from this House for the bravery, courage, and endurance which he has displayed in upholding the sadly tarnished honour of this country. Was that the kind of negotiation which the Government meant to carry out? There were lots of people in the camp who, if it had been really desired to enter into negotiations with Osman Digna, could have explained to those unfortunate Natives that they were no longer fighting against an effete and corrupt Government, but against the British Forces. How can you say that you have satisfied the claims of humanity by sending out this message which was written in English and stuck in the sand? Now, Sir, about this defence of Suakin, I want the House to remark what the Prime Minister says. He wishes the House to believe that this expedition of General Graham was necessary for the defence of Suakin. Then I ask why was it not undertaken weeks and weeks ago, because this is certain, that the Government would never have sent the expedition had they not been forced to send it by the House of Commons. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has stated that if we had defended Suakin in the way the hon. Baronet suggests, we should have had to leave a garrison in the place, which would have been left there for an indefinite period. What is the conclusion which we must draw from that? That they intend to get away from the place? If they do, it makes their con-conduct hopelessly guilty, for in defending a town which they avow they intend to evacuate they have wantonly slaughtered 3,000 or 4,000 Arabs. The Government may think this a matter unworthy of their notice, but the country does not think so. Brighton did not think so. A day will come, and it may be very soon, when Brighton will not be the only constituency which will have to give its judgment on the policy of the Government. The Government may then, when it is too late, regret that they did not yield to the entreaties of the hon. Baronet and the Leader of the Opposition to state frankly their policy. The pretext thought good enough by the Prime Minister to give to the House only proves to me how extraordinarily the House of Commons has sunk in the eyes of the right hon. Gentleman. He says it is well known in war that movements which are offensive in their nature are sometimes defensive in their essence. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Offensive in their form.] What does that come to, that the attack of General Graham was offensive in its form, but not in its nature? What? Three thousand men or more slaughtered as a matter of form by movements which were not offensive in their nature! That is a species of destruction which I venture to say has never been witnessed before in the history of the world. From sources of information which are open to us, and which seem to be more reliable than those of the Government, from a Reuter's telegram, we gather that Osman Digna, with a large force, is encamped in the neighbourhood of Suakin, so that it becomes all the more necessary that we should have a frank statement from the Government. The Prime Minister the other night accepted with much enthusiasm the policy of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle—"Rescue and retire." Whom have you rescued? The 300 soldiers of Tokar! Why, the greater part of that garrison fought against England at Teb, and they were perfectly happy among the followers of Osman. It was only after the victory of General Graham that they thought it more prudent to express some kind of satisfaction with Her Majesty's troops. They were not, I say, rescued, and I call it, not the relief, but the recapture of Tokar, which has been effected by General Graham, for Tokar had already fallen. I would now ask whether the phrase "Retire" governs the policy of Her Majesty's Ministers? Do they intend retiring from Suakin and Khartoum; and, if so, when; and when do they mean to carry out the policy of retiring from Egypt Proper? The whole of Europe and this country are under the impression that Her Majesty's Government are going within a short time to retire from Egypt. Will they state that intention openly and take the judgment of the House upon it. If, again, they mean to occupy Egypt, with all the resources of the Empire, and set up a stable Government, then let them get up and say so, and take the judgment of the House upon that policy. Until we do get a definite statement embracing one or other of these policies, I do earnestly hope that the House will absolutely refuse to grant the Supplies necessary to carry on the Government.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the noble Lord who has just sat down expressed great astonishment that no Member of the Government rose to reply to the Questions put by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition as to the present policy of the Government in the Soudan. Well, Sir, these Questions were not put to the Government in so definite and precise a form as to invite, or make it possible to give, succinct answers. What has happened which should make it necessary for the Government to give any further explanation of their policy in regard to the Soudan than was given by several Members of the Government at great length in the recent debate? The policy which the Government were endeavouring to pursue in the Soudan, in Egypt, and on the shores of the Red Sea, was clearly and distinctly stated during the progress of that debate. A part of that policy, which was then announced—the sending out of an expedition to relieve Tokar, and for the defence of the Red Sea ports—has been carried to a successful issue; but what is there in that fact to make it necessary for the Government to volunteer further explanations than those they gave a short time ago? I do not think the time has arrived when the Government can advantageously make any further announcement. At all events, if there are any definite Questions to be put to the Government upon any particular point in relation to this matter, the time to put them would be when the Votes for the Supplementary Estimates are brought forward, which would not be later than Thursday next. The noble Lord has repeated in still stronger language the charge made by the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) that the battle on Friday last was an unprovoked slaughter. I entirely deny that allegation, whether it comes from the noble Lord or from the hon. Member. I say that every step which could be taken by the Government to prevent the necessity for that loss of life was taken by the Government and by General Graham and Admiral Hewett, and no part of the responsibility for that loss of life can be justly charged to the Government or to their officers. The noble Lord ridiculed what took place in the sending of a flag of truce, and he says that General Graham had not authority to conduct negotiations. Of course, General Graham had perfect power and authority to do anything of the kind, and long before he was there not only did the officers on the spot have authority, but they were distinctly given authority by the Government. On the 13th of February, the day after the expedition was ordered, a telegram was sent to Admiral Hewett in these words—

> "You are at liberty to enter into communication with the rebels before Tokar and Suakin, and to tell them that we do not want to go to war with them, and to tell Osman Digna that if he does not let the garrison go we will relieve it."

The noble Lord has asked a great many questions, but he does not appear to pay the slightest attention to the answers. After these instructions were given, messengers were sent both to the garrison of Tokar and to the force which was besieging Tokar, repeating those instructions; and the result was stated in one of the telegrams I read in answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) this evening. On the 18th of February, Admiral Hewett telegraphed that, in reply to letters sent to the rebel Chiefs outside Tokar stating that the English intended relieving the garrison and to protect Suakin, Osman Digna had coolly informed him that all those who did not believe in the Mahdi would receive the same fate as the others, and that after the fall of Tokar he would go through Suakin and drive the English into the sea. He added—"I therefore do not intend sending him any more messengers." Does the noble Lord believe that after these instructions had been given to the Admiral, who was working in concert with the General, the General would not consider himself authorized to send messengers if he thought it would have any effect? But it is asked—Why did not you give more precise instructions to the General at an early date? Well, I do not think it is necessary to be constantly worrying officers with instructions to do that which they are perfectly competent to do of themselves. The only reason why the telegram I have read was sent last week was, that I was surprised and anxious at not having received any answer to my telegram to General Graham, in which I had asked him to report fully upon the measures he proposed to take in the event of Tokar having surrendered. Can it be said, after the receipt of such a message as I have read, that any measure likely to be efficient was neglected in order to enable the Arabs to know that we were anxious not to fight them unless we were compelled, and can it be for one moment contended that the battle which was fought on Friday was unnecessary both for the purpose of relieving any of the garrison which might be remaining at Tokar, and also for the protection of Suakin? The right hon. Gentleman has referred to something he has read in one of the newspapers about the Arabs not knowing that they were fighting against English troops. It would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the whole passage. My recollection of what I read is that the soldiers said they were not aware that they were fighting against English troops; but the rebel Chiefs did know it, and had concealed it from their followers. That is the statement I read in the papers this morning, and it is not fairly referred to in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. A great deal has been said about our intentions with regard to Suakin. It has been asked whether we intend to retire; and criticisms have been made upon the statement of my right hon. Friend that it would have been impossible for the British Forces to defend Suakin behind mud walls. Of course it is not possible; it could not be garrisoned for an indefinite time by a great British Force, in a climate rapidly becoming quite unfit for a large number of British troops, and pent up in a small, unhealthy town. But do you suppose that 3,000 or 4,000 men could be kept in camp at Suakin waiting until it might please Osman Digna, or whoever the Arab leader might be, to attack them? It is evident that that was perfectly out of the question. When there were two large opposing forces in the field, one of which had gained over the garrison of Tokar, while another had captured Sinkat, and they were threatening to advance on Suakin and sweep the British into the sea, the only way that Suakin could be defended was by attacking those forces. The right hon. Gentleman says there is yet a force under Osman Digna a short distance from Suakin. That is strictly true according to the last intelligence; but how does he know what may be the effect upon them of the battle which was fought last Friday? The hon. Member for Carlisle has assumed throughout his speech that that action was fought solely for the purpose of vengeance and inflicting a blow on the rebel Chiefs. I maintain that he has not justified that assertion by one particle of proof. He has not been able to quote one single passage of the instructions to the General or the Admiral which bears out the supposition that that was the intention of the Government. I am sure that nothing could be more unfair to the Admiral and the General than to suppose that they have taken upon themselves to enter upon operations which were not sanctioned by the instructions of the Government. As to Tokar itself, it appears to me that until General Graham arrived there on Saturday, it was possible he might have been in uncertainty as to whether the Egyptian garrison was still holding out there; and would anyone have thought it right and proper that an expedition which had been sent to relieve Tokar, if possible, should retire without having ascertained for certain that the object of that expedition was no longer attainable? I think the service which has been rendered, although not so great as it might otherwise have been if the Egyptian troops had not surrendered, is still not one to be despised. General Graham reports that the Egyptian men, women, and children whom he found in Tokar had been grievously oppressed and ill-treated by their Arab captors, and that they received him with great rejoicings, and that it is probable that the women and children would have shared the fate of those at Sinkat if Tokar had not been relieved by General Graham. I do not know what Question there is that it is necessary for the Government to answer on this point. The Government are now anxious to bring forward the Supplementary Estimates, and if any further question arises it can be discussed on those Estimates. I fail to see why the success of an expedition, the sending out of which was universally approved, makes it incumbent upon the Government to offer any further explanation as to their policy in Egypt or the Soudan.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: The interesting speech of the noble Marquess is entirely of a retrospective character. He has not said a single word about the future; but the object of the Motion and of the strong speech of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) is to press upon the Government questions relating to the future and not to the past. The noble Marquess has asked what has happened since the Prime Minister spoke in the great debate on the affairs of Egypt, which could justify these questions being put. A good deal has happened. The vote of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was gained in the belief that the expedition would not be too late for the relief of Tokar, and it was too late. The vote of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was given under the impression that there would be no fighting, and that Tokar would be relieved without bloodshed. Tokar was not relieved, and there has been a great deal of bloodshed. Those are among the events which have occurred since the debate to which the noble Marquess referred with such complacency. But since then has nothing happened in another part of the Soudan? Have we no disquieting news from Khartoum? Why did not the noble Marquess himself tell us earlier this evening that a great part of the new Egyptian Army is ordered up to Assouan? And—although it is not certain whether instructions to that effect will or will not be sent—it may be that instructions will be sent for a portion of the British force to follow them in that direction. All that has happened since the debate of a week or 10 days ago. But, besides that, we now hear a little more of General Gordon's proceedings at Khartoum. Are we to take no notice of those proceedings? Colonel Stewart's expedition on the White Nile has turned out to be unsuccessful. Is that to be set aside and not considered? Do Her Majesty's Government think that the House of Commons and the country are to be as deaf and as blind to all that takes place in the Soudan as they have proved themselves to be? No; the noble Marquess may take it for granted that until Her Majesty's Government state clearly and explicitly what is their policy in Egypt and in the Soudan, they will—if they please so to call it—be persecuted by Questions from both sides of the House. As to the occupation of Suakin, what do we hear from the Prime Minister? Suakin is to be occupied, and to continue to be occupied, with the view of putting down the Slave Trade, until some other or better arrangement can be made with that object. Can the right hon. Gentleman really give us the slightest indication of the period in which the Slave Trade will be put down on the shores of the Red Sea except by the maintenance of British power on the littoral? Neither the right hon. Gentleman nor the noble Marquess has given us the slightest satisfaction on this branch of the question. I would remind the House how it is that the British Government suddenly find themselves responsible for the putting down of the Slave Trade on the shores of the Red Sea. It is in consequence of their own inaction and fatuity in respect to the Soudan. If it had not been for the mischievous misconduct on the part of the Government in permitting Hicks Pasha to go to his doom, we never should have heard of this new and frightful responsibility upon the British Government of maintaining positions on the Red Sea in order to suppress the Slave Trade. These are among the matters which the House will have to consider, and the country will not be content that Her Majesty's Government should maintain their present silence on all these important questions.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 103; Noes 150: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th February],

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Bill to amend the Representation of the People of the United Kingdom will be satisfactory which does not provide an increased number of representatives for the Kingdom of Scotland up to the full measure which justice demands, according to population and the share of revenue which it contributes,"—(*Admiral Sir John Hay,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. BLENNERHASSETT said, that he did not consider it necessary to touch at any length upon the arguments put forward against the principle of the Bill, which had had as little reality about them as the remarks of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) about the vacant spaces on that side of the House during its introduction. The right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) had said that the temper of the country was indifferent about this Bill; it was true that the country was not excited, but that was only because the country had perfect faith that the Bill was safe in the hands of the Government. There was, undoubtedly, a very deep and strong feeling in favour of it throughout the country, and excitement would very soon arise if it was thought that there was the slightest danger to it. The right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University remarked that when the very large addition to the Irish electorate was mentioned he saw no hilarity on the Liberal Benches. Well, it was a grave and momentous question, and he (Mr. Blennerhassett) saw nothing in it which should cause hilarity. Subject to one condition, which he would mention presently, there was no part of the statement of the Prime Minister to which he personally listened with more entire satisfaction. The object of Parliamentary reform was to elicit the opinions and public purposes of the people; and although they might think the state of public opinion in Ireland was not entirely satisfactory, no course would be more unwise or foolish than to refrain from allowing the opinions that existed there to be expressed. He had heard with extreme satisfaction that the provisions of this Bill were to be extended to Ireland, and that it was proposed to remove all invidious distinctions in civil rights between Ireland and England, and he rejoiced that the great bulk of the Irish householders were to be told that there was a place ready for them in the Constitution. He had been glad also to hear the statement of the Prime Minister that he did not propose to reduce the number of Members for Ireland, as he thought that that would have been unjust and injudicious. Surely when they remembered that for many years the representation of Ireland was disproportionately small for her population, it would be a very ungenerous thing, directly the state of things was altered, to reduce the representation. Liberal Members were not going to allow anything to fritter away or compromise the great principle of the enfranchisement of householders. They could not consent to maintain fantastic distinctions of privilege. They did not think it right to leave any class out of the representation, and they heartily welcomed the artizans, miners, labourers, and other householders whom this Bill would enfranchise. He was glad also to welcome the enfranchisement of the agricultural population, that helpless multitude, according to Mr. Cobden, who had never made their voice heard or their power felt in any social movement. Now, he thought he had said enough to show that he was a sincere friend of the Bill. He was ready also to waive all particular preferences and predilections and to look at the broad scope and purpose of the measure. He was convinced also that the Government were right in postponing redistribution until the new Register was ready. There was one subject of great importance which met them on the very threshold of the question, and to which he must direct attention, although he did so in no obstructive or hostile spirit. He and others were anxious to know, when this great measure was passed, which introduced 2,000,000 of new electors, what security would be given for the expression of political opinions of all sections and classes of society? They were anxious to know what security there was that this great enfranchisement measure would be just as well as generous. They wished to obtain a more explicit declaration on the subject before they took a step which was irrevocable. The Prime Minister had stated that he did not approve of electoral districts. The creation of these would undoubtedly give a great shock to the feelings of the country. They had heard that the number of Members was to be increased in the large towns of England, especially in the North; but he should like to know on what principle the seven, eight, or nine Members of a large town were to be elected? For instance, if in one of these large towns there should happen to be about 31,000 Conservatives and 30,000 Liberals, were the whole body of Members to be elected by the 31,000 Conservatives, while the 30,000 Liberals were entirely unrepresented? But, passing to the case of Ireland, with which he was better acquainted, they were told the electorate was to be increased from 228,000 to between 400,000 and 500,000. It was impossible to ignore the fact that this was making a complete transfer of political power from those who now possessed it to the new electorate. It had been rightly estimated that of the whole population of Ireland about 65 or 70 per cent held extreme views on political questions. If this Bill were passed without any safeguard such as he hoped to indicate, no person who was practically acquainted with Ireland could doubt that the effect of the measure would be that in every constituency throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, except four or five constituencies at the very outside, those of extreme opinions would command a majority, and would sweep the representation. In this way 65 or 70 per cent of the electors would obtain 85 or 90, or perhaps even 95, per cent of the representation. On the other hand, the remaining 30 or 35 per cent of the population would be politically annihilated and effaced. That 30 or 35 per cent held 60 or 70 per cent of the wealth of the country, and included the great majority of the men of enterprize, culture, and education upon whom the prosperity and progress of the country largely depended. He could hardly imagine a proposal more unhappy than a proposal to condemn to apathy and exclusion from political life this minority of the people of Ireland. But he, for one, should not be prepared to avert that calamity by refusing to extend to the people of Ireland equal privileges with the people of England. There was one remedy, and one only, for the state of things to which he had adverted, and that lay in giving to the minority that measure of political power which reason and justice said they were entitled to. He thought there was no fact more remarkable than the progress which had been made during the last few weeks in public opinion in favour of proportional representation, and he ventured to hope that the adoption of that principle would be the crowning glory of this great Bill of the Prime Minister. The principle had suffered a great deal from misapprehension, because it had been confounded with various imperfect expedients, such as three-cornered constituencies and the cumulative vote. The ends for which the promoters of this principle strove were very straightforward, simple, and clear. They desired, first, that each important section of opinion should have the chance of being represented in proportion to its numbers; and, secondly, whilst desiring the supremacy of the majority, they wished also to prevent the silencing and blotting-out of the minority. They did not indulge in Utopian ideas, and they had no wish to reconstruct the electoral system. But they said — "Suppose you take the great English constituencies, to which you propose to give a large number of Members, and suppose you take the four Provinces of Ireland and allow the minority to combine their votes, you will then make effectual provision that no considerable minority shall be silenced." What would be the effect of adopting that just and reasonable plan? It would enable them to find out what was the true majority, and give it its real power and influence, and it would put it out of the power of small minorities in great constituencies to exert an influence on public elections disproportionate to their numbers. It would prevent artificial fluctuations and changes in the balance of political power, and it would add weight and dignity to the House of Commons, because it would make that House more than ever truly representative of public feeling. He had no want of confidence in the people; but on the widest principle of democracy, a majority, however great, had no right to monopolize the representation, and shut out those who differed from them from any voice in public affairs. This Bill was based on the principle of equal and impartial justice between the great geographical divisions of the Kingdom and between the urban and rural populations. He believed it wanted merely the recognition of the great principle of free and equal voting to make it the grandest measure of Reform that was ever submitted to Parliament. It would combine the freest extension of popular privilege with the preservation of the rights and liberties of every section of the community; it would be a safeguard alike against popular passion and oligarchical reaction; and it would secure that the House of Commons, through all the chances and changes of the future, should represent not merely the passion or violence of the hour, but the best thought and intelligence of the whole nation.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that he was in almost entire agreement with the hon. Member who had just sat down on the question of proportional representation, and he could hardly imagine a Reform Bill so extensive that it would be unsafe to adopt if it were associated with that principle. With regard to that principle, valuable as he thought it would be, and safe as it would make the enlargement of the franchise, it was the only means by which it would be permanently possible to retain Ireland within the Parliamentary system of the country, and therefore he heartily wished it could be incorporated with the present measure. He would, however, point out to the hon. Gentleman that it was impossible to incorporate that measure in a Bill which proposed simply to enlarge the franchise. It must be accompanied by redistribution. And therefore, if they were to have any resort to that principle, which would alone give satisfactory and full representation, it must be by insisting upon redistribution being coupled with the enlargement of the franchise, and the whole question being dealt with in one Act. It was remarkable when the first supporter of the Bill rose to hear the arguments by which he supported it. He referred to that instance upon which the Prime Minister had dwelt, the instance of Glasgow, where the natural development of the industrial concerns of the city had forced large numbers of the working men to live outside its Parliamentary boundaries, and he appealed to them on that side of the House as to whether they would say that those men should be excluded from the franchise. He thought all would say that they ought to have the franchise; but these men were inhabitants of Glasgow, they had their homes there and their votes, and the natural increase in the wealth and industry of Glasgow drove them beyond the limits of the Parliamentary borough. If the distinction between town and country constituencies was to be retained, what was the remedy for the grievance of these men? It was not the extension of the franchise to the counties; it was the inclusion of the place they now lived in in the borough of Glasgow. In his opinion, the first thing which should be done was the appointment of a strong and impartial Boundary Commission to decide the limits which these towns were to have. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) said it was an anomaly that the minority of the voters should elect the majority of the Members of that House. But how did this Bill remedy that inequality? It, in fact, created a greater anomaly in giving to the towns 90 more Members than they ought to have, and in taking 90 Members away from the counties. It was remarkable that the Prime Minister, who had great experience with figures, almost entirely ignored them in his speech. He had arrived almost at the end of it when he told them of the number of voters which would be added to England, Scotland, and Ireland, and he gave them no information as to the source from which he made his calculations. [Mr. GLADSTONE signified dissent.] The mere extension of the franchise would not remove anomalies. Under this Bill the counties would have 2,750,000 of electors, and the boroughs 1,750,000. The counties, therefore, should have 277 Members; but, as a matter of fact, they would have 187, or 90 fewer Members than they were entitled to. He hoped they would have some figures before the second reading, which would show them the real effect of the proposals of the Government. He approved of the service franchise, because, in his judgment, it would restore, reinforce, and strengthen the influence of authority, position and property which by the other parts of the Bill they were going to diminish. He thought that the title "service franchise" was curiously infelicitous. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Give us a better.] He should try to meet that. It seemed to him this "service franchise" was a somewhat offensive term. It meant, of course, a servant's franchise. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] What else was it? He was challenged to give the Government a better title. He replied there was no reason for a title at all. It was simply an extension of the household franchise, and the only thing necessary was a provision enacting that henceforth householders should not be disqualified by reason of the terms of the occupation of their houses. He hoped they should hear from the Government what alteration, if any, they proposed to make in this matter. Then with regard to the freehold vote, the proposals of the Government were far from satisfactory. He denied that the Bill could fairly be taken as proposing an equalization of the franchise as between boroughs and counties in that it proposed to retain the 40*s*. freeholder within certain limitations which were by no means clearly defined, and in cases where an elector had a qualification in a county and also in a borough situate within the county he was not to vote in the borough, where in most cases his largest interest lay, but in the county. The scheme as it stood was, in his view, not only misleading but mischievous, in that it would not only fail to give a full and accurate representation of the opinion of the people of the country, but would make it almost impossible to obtain such a representation. The Prime Minister appealed to his supporters not to imperil the Bill by proposing Amendments in it, on the ground that it was a large Bill; but the simplefact that it was a large Bill would make it more difficult hereafter to amend by readjusting the relations between the counties and boroughs, in that the Bill in its present form would create an overwhelming majority in the borough constituencies in a single class of voters—a fact which would prove a dead weight round the necks of the Government when they came to deal with the redistribution of power. Another defect in the Bill would be that it would give to Ireland an enormous number of the Irreconcilable Party in Parliament, as they had been described by a distinguished Member of the House, who would practically have the redistribution of political power in England and Scotland in their own hands. The Prime Minister had expressed the, to him, curious opinion that the work of redistribution had hitherto been weak and trivial because it had been coupled with the question of the franchise. It seemed to him that the two things were inseparably connected, because there never could have been any redistribution if it had not been connected with the franchise. What would be the state of things if they were discussing redistribution alone? There were now in the House 56 Members who sat for boroughs having less than 10,000 inhabitants, and of these 27 hon. Members sat on the Liberal Benches. The Government could scarcely suppose that these Gentlemen would support a Bill which would have the effect of disfranchising the constituencies for which they sat. The Prime Minister had never concealed his belief that redistribution and the franchise formed part of one essential whole, and the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) on one occasion expressed the opinion that the franchise might be extended in any way and it would be possible to nullify that extension by a Redistribution Bill. In 1867 several Members of Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that a Franchise Bill ought to be coupled with a Redistribution Bill; but what did they say now? They said that they had learnt a good deal since then; but had they learnt wisdom? The Prime Minister had given the House his personal opinions on the subject of redistribution. The right hon. Gentleman could not utter the opinions of his Cabinet because they were divided in opinion on the subject. There must have been wide divergence of opinion in the Cabinet on the subject for the Prime Minister to be compelled to give the House his individual views on this question. But in what position did the House find itself? The Prime Minister had declared that in his view Ireland should be allowed to retain her unfair preponderance of representation, and that the just claims of Scotland and of the North of England should be satisfied at the expense of the South and West of England. In that case the four small boroughs which must go in the West of England would be Liskeard, Tavistock, Bodmin, and Launceston, three of which were represented by staunch Liberals, including the Secretary to the Treasury. But what would the West of England say if they were to be disfranchised in order to enable the Government to buy the support of the Irish Members during the passage of this Bill through the House? It must be recollected that, although the ultimate views of the Prime Minister might be moderate enough, there were among his Colleagues on the Treasury Bench men who were far beyond the right hon. Member for Birmingham in their political views—men who aimed at universal suffrage, and at a complete transference of the political power of the country. In a few years the Prime Minister would be compelled to retire from political life, and then who would regard themselves as bound by his individual opinions? In bringing in their Franchise Bill, the Government ought to have clearly announced their views as to redistribution, and should have been compelled to stand or fall by those views. As matters stood now, if the Government proposals were adopted and the Franchise Bill alone were passed, we should have enormous and unwieldy constituencies returning Members who would deal with redistribution haphazard. It must be recollected that even if the Franchise Bill were passed this year, it would be impossible to pass the Registration Bill in time for the Registers to be corrected before January, 1886, when it would be too late for the present Parliament to enter on the work of redistribution. He was strongly in favour of proportional representation. Moreover, the constituencies were beginning to exercise a direct control over their Members. He believed in the honesty of purpose of all classes of the people. At the same time, in a great country like this, with its complex arrangements, its extended authority, and its intricate relations with other nations, there frequently and suddenly started up questions which demanded the calmest judgment and statesmanship. When such questions first became the subject of public discussion, it was impossible that the constituencies should be well informed with regard to them. Ignorance was always passionate, and passion was always blind, and those who had the firmest belief in the patriotic instincts of the people might be anxious that in some way the public feeling of the country should be guarded and modified so that the opinion of those who did not happen for the moment to be in the majority might find vent in that House. He believed this Bill would be mischievous, and that it would not help us in procuring a fair distribution of political power. It was recommended to the House and the country by expectations which could never be fulfilled, and by promises which could never be kept; it would disfranchise loyalty in Ireland, and it would place the conduct of Public Business almost at the mercy of the irreconcilable or rebel faction in that House. Therefore, he hoped the House would in the first instance demand that a full explanation should be given of the real purpose and scope of the measure, and that it would refuse to deal with it at all unless it were protected by proper safeguards.

Mr. WALTER said, that the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke), in the course of his able speech, had remarked that the case of Glasgow, to which the Prime Minister had referred, where so many persons had been practically disfranchised, was one which should be settled by a readjustment of boundaries rather than by an extension of the franchise, and he had spoken of the propriety of appointing a Boundary Commission to determine questions of that character. Now, it was in the capacity of Boundary Commissioner—an office which he had the honour to fill 17 years ago, and in which he was with other Gentlemen engaged in putting, as it were, the finishing touch to the Reform Bill of 1867—that he was anxious to say a few words on the general aspect of the question as presented by the Prime Minister. He hoped to be able to impress upon Friends of his who might entertain doubts as to the propriety of extending the franchise to householders in the counties that in doing so they were not incurring any such great danger as possibly they might have been led to apprehend. The propriety of extending household suffrage to the county population did not depend upon the fact that their brethren in the towns had that privilege already extended to them. If he recollected rightly, that was one of the arguments addressed to them in the speech of the Prime Minister. But the argument that had always weighed with him was that as a matter of fact the householders in a number of counties in England had that privilege already, and that in passing that Bill they would be merely extending to the majority of the counties the identical privilege which had been long enjoyed by the minority. The Boundary Commission on which he had served examined very carefully into the condition of every borough in the Kingdom, and the first difficulty they met with was to find out what was a borough. It might surprise many hon. Members to hear—some hon. Members had been surprised when he told them—that there were no fewer than five boroughs in England—namely, East Retford, Cricklade, Shoreham, Salisbury, and Wenlock, which contained in all 600,000 acres, ranging from East Retford, with an acreage of 212,000, to Wenlock, with 51,000 acres. Thus, the average was 120,000 acres. If it was borne in mind that the county of Rutland contained only 94,000 acres, and the Isle of Wight about the same number, it was seen that in point of area there were already five boroughs larger than Rutland and the Isle of Wight in each of which occupying householders had enjoyed the franchise for 17 years. He had never heard of any harm resulting from that enjoyment. Then there were 12 boroughs each with under 50,000 and over 20,000 acres, averaging 25,000 acres each. Each of those boroughs was a large electoral district. The next 22 boroughs contained each under 20,000 and over 10,000 acres, averaging 13,000 acres. Then there were 18 boroughs with less than 10,000 and more than 5,000, averaging 7,000 acres each. Now, an acreage of 2,000 was sufficient for a population of 60,000, and was about the space occupied on the average by a borough of 60,000 inhabitants. It would thus be seen what a large extent of England those agricultural boroughs or counties really covered. Those boroughs, nearly 60 in number, to which he had referred, excluded Sheffield and Leeds, which with a large acreage had also very large populations. But boroughs containing an acreage of over 5,000 occupied no less an area than 1,300,000 acres, or more than the whole diocese of Oxford. With those facts before them, there was not one of his Colleagues on the Boundary Commission who did not, like himself, say that when the question of the extension of the franchise to householders in the counties was brought forward it would be impossible to resist the claim. But another fact that forced itself upon their minds, and which in his mind had never been dissociated from the question, was that the state of the boroughs in England was such that a redistribution of seats ought to be an inseparable part of any great extension of the franchise. No doubt there were Parliamentary difficulties—practical difficulties connected with the subject—which might make such a course impossible. He could not but regret that it was impossible. But, having obtained satisfactory assurances from the Prime Minister that he considered that the two questions were bound together, and that the second ought to follow immediately after the first, he was willing to accept that assurance as a reason for postponing the consideration of a question which, on abstract grounds, he quite agreed ought to be considered at the same time as the franchise question. The Prime Minister had said the other night that no Reform Bill had ever been presented to the House as a complete measure. That depended upon the sense given to the word "complete." The Reform Bill of 1832 was, for instance, not complete, in so far as it had to be followed by the Irish and Scotch measures, but it was complete as to the questions of franchise and redistribution. The Act of 1867, which was incomplete in some other respects, was complete so far as regarded those two essential branches of the subject. With regard to the last class of electors who were to be admitted to the franchise, he could only say, from his own experience, that they were composed mainly of a class in no way inferior—he thought in many ways superior—to the class of persons who at present enjoyed it. The Prime Minister had observed that even the agricultural labourer—the lowest scale in the county population—was very often a highly skilled labourer, and a man of good sense, moderation, and good conduct. Then there was the large artizan class, and the other persons who occupied houses under £12 in large towns. They were very intelligent, well conducted, and trustworthy people. He was not sure that it might not be advantageous to commend it to the consideration of the Minister of Education, if he might so call him, to introduce elementary books into the schools on the duties of the British citizen; it might be advisable that the rising generation should be taught to understand that in giving a vote for a candidate they were not conferring an eternal obligation. That, he thought, might be a desirable thing to do; but, taking them as a class, he believed they were in every respect as trustworthy—as far as his personal experience was concerned they were more trustworthy—as any other class in the community in the same position of life. He did not intend to go into the question of the advantage or otherwise of the substitution of the £10 clear yearly value qualification for the £12 rental. There was, however, one addition to the franchise, or rather one condition of the franchise, recommended to the House which he desired to notice. He had heard with very great pleasure the recognition of a class of voters who, as the law now stood, would be disqualified, although they were in many respects better qualified than many other voters. He meant those persons included in the "service" franchise. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth in thinking that no very good reason existed for importing a new name and for changing the occupation into the "service" franchise. He thought that the word "occupation" was wide enough to cover any kind of franchise conferred upon a voter except the lodger. In *Henry IV.* it was said, "The word 'occupy' was an excellent word till it was ill-sorted." The same might be said of the word "occupation." But he saw no reason why the payment of rent should ever have been a necessary condition of the exercise of the franchise in respect of occupation. It was perfectly notorious that all over England, and on the best managed estates in particular, a great number of persons who occupied houses in the capacity of bailiffs, farm labourers, yardmen, shepherds, carpenters, and other mechanics, lived rent free and occupied lodges or other houses by virtue of their employment, and were placed in that position on account of their good conduct. What an absurd thing it was, therefore, that, in order to carry out this hocus-pocus arrangement of voting, they must give a man a few shillings more of wages. It would be far better to give it him as a simple matter of occupation, and allow him to have a vote so long as his taxes were paid. There was another point in connection with this franchise part of the question to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred, and upon which he hoped, in the course of this debate, they would hear something more. He did not wish to dogmatize on this subject, or to form any very positive opinion; but they had been now for many years past assimilating the county and borough franchise — that was to say, they had been lowering the county franchise. They had been making it one more of occupation and much less of property qualification. Why not, he asked, go further while they were about it? In the boroughs, as was well known, the possession of freehold conferred no vote for the Parliamentary borough. If a man occupied his own freehold in a borough he voted for the borough; but if he did not occupy his own freehold he gave a vote for the county. Supposing he and another hon. Gentleman occupied two contiguous houses of exactly the same value in a borough, they being freehold houses. That occupation would give each of them a vote for the borough. So long as they were of opposite politics each gentleman would occupy his own house, and each would have a vote for the borough. But supposing they were of the same politics, one might say to his next-door neighbour—"Why should we not vote for the county too? We have only to change houses—you paying me a pound and I paying you a pound." That was a fact. He did not like arrangements of that hocus-pocus character; and if the arrangement he had mentioned in his illustration were not carried out, all he could say was that he wondered it was not done. He wanted to know why, since they were now going so far in the direction of assimilating the borough and county franchise, they did not make a clean job of it at once? There were hon. Members in that House who were old enough to remember that, when this question was mooted in 1832, the late Sir Robert Peel strongly advocated the method he had suggested, and it was stoutly opposed by the Government of the day. The ground of opposition always was that there was this broad distinction between the borough and the county franchises—that property was represented in the county, and occupation in the borough. But now they were more and more diminishing the importance of the property qualification in the counties, and making the qualification one of occupation. Therefore, he said, why not lay down the principle that, wherever a man's property was there his vote should be? On what ground of common sense or natural arrangement could a man be allowed to vote in one electoral district in virtue of property which lay in another district? It would simplify the whole subject if the franchise were made uniform now that the Government were going so far. He wished to say a few words about the connection between the counties and the question of redistribution. He thought it had been stated by a Member of the Cabinet, during the Recess, that he did not see what connection there was between the two questions. It seemed to him very strange that any hon. Gentleman should not see the connection. The connection was obvious to him. He quite agreed with what had been said by a late eminent man in that House—that "you cannot deal with the distribution of power in this country in a partial manner." They could not import a vast number of electors into the political system without disturbing the existing equilibrium. In that case, undoubtedly, the addition of 1,300,000 electors to the county constituencies of England and Wales would greatly aggravate the injustice under which the counties at present laboured by virtue of the inequality in which they stood as compared with the boroughs. The following figures were, of course, familiar to the minds of most hon. Members. The population of the counties, excluding the Parliamentary boroughs, was about 14,000,000. The population of the Parliamentary boroughs was about 13,000,000, making the counties 1,000,000 over the boroughs as regarded population. The number of inhabited houses was 500,000 more in the counties than in the boroughs, and yet the number of Members was 110 less. Of course, it might be said that this Bill did not disturb the population. No; but it greatly aggravated the inequalities by making so great an addition to the electoral power of that population. He, therefore, thought the counties had a right to complain of being unjustly treated in the matter of the distribution of political power, unless a great addition was made to the number of their Members as soon as possible after the passing of this measure. A great many authorities had been quoted on this subject, and a great many speeches had been made in that House and "elsewhere" distinctly recognizing the impropriety of dealing only with one branch of this question. He did not think the passage he wished to read had been quoted to the House before. Earl Russell, in his "Reminiscences," referred to a remarkable scheme that had been proposed by Oliver Cromwell for reforming the representation of the United Kingdom. Earl Russell said—

> "I confess it appears to me that if the question of Parliamentary reform is again touched, Parliament ought not to content itself with giving to householders in counties the same right of voting which they have in boroughs, lopping off a few small towns, but that the scheme of Cromwell should be revived in these better times—*i.e.*, greatly enlarging the representation of the counties, giving one Member each to the large towns, and totally omitting the small boroughs."

The case of the small boroughs had often been pleaded in that House—he had heard it pleaded by the Prime Minister himself—on the ground that they ought to be retained for the sake of sending rising young statesmen or promising young lawyers to Parliament. Things were much altered since 1867. Even in his own time three out of the four boroughs in Berkshire had very much distinguished themselves by the class of Members they had sent to Parliament. Abingdon had produced a Lord Chancellor, Wallingford a Vice Chancellor, and Reading two Judges. Without any disrespect to the excellent Gentlemen who now filled those seats, it could not be said that they were either promising young statesmen or rising lawyers. Taking a survey of the small boroughs, he did not think they had fulfilled the functions for which their existence had been upheld. In his own coutry there were five borough Members and three county Members. There were at present about 8,000 county voters. This Bill would increase the number to 16,000, and would, accordingly, be a great aggravation of the inequality in which the county of Berkshire stood in relation to its boroughs. He had no hesitation in sketching a Redistribution Bill for that county which would disfranchise two of the boroughs and divide the county. It might not be a bad thing if each county Member sent in his own scheme for the consideration of the Government. As to the question of minority representation, he considered himself one of its victims. He now sat for a minority seat. It was far less comfortable than under the old system. The minority Member was not in the same position of independence. There was this vital objection to the system, that in the event of the minority Member wishing or being compelled to retire he was precluded by the fact that his doing so might give the seat to the other side. That fact alone would make him hostile to the system. He was rather sorry to hear the Prime Minister had so soon made up his mind as to the case of Ireland. He did not at that moment wish to make any reflections on the subject. But he thought that the House ought to know on what basis the proportion of Irish Members was fixed at the time of the Union. Perhaps it might not be known that the quota of 100 Members fixed at the time of the Union was suggested to Mr. Pitt by the then Irish Parliament. Mr. Pitt did not himself consider it of very great importance to fix the precise number, but he said—

> "At the same time, when it is necessary that the number should be fixed, it is necessary to have recourse to some principle to guide our determination; and I am not aware of any one that can be more properly adopted than that which was laid down in the discussions upon this part of the subject in the Parliament of Ireland—I mean a reference to the supposed population of the two countries and to the proposed rate of contribution. I do not think that the proportion of the population or the capability of contribution, taken separately, would either of them form so good a criterion as when taken together; but, even when combined, I do not mean to say that they are perfectly accurate. Taking this principle, it will appear that the proportion of contribution proposed to be established is seven and a-half for Great Britain and one for Ireland, and that in the proportion of population Great Britain is to Ireland as two and a-half or three to one; so that the result, upon a combination of these two, will be something more than five to one in favour of Great Britain, which is about the proportion which it is proposed to establish between the Representatives of the two countries."

That was the basis on which the quota of Irish Members was fixed by Mr. Pitt at the time of the Union, and unless any better reason could be given for altering the principle, the same basis should be adopted now, with one reservation. He fully recognized the importance of the element of distance or area which the Prime Minister referred to as a factor in the question. He thought that other things being equal, the element of distance ought to be taken into account, and some allowance made for the inconvenience of Members having to cross the Channel to perform their Parliamentary duties. Indeed, he had always regarded St. George's Channel as being at the root of the Irish difficulty. He would allow an addition of, perhaps, 5 per cent in the case of both Scotland and Ireland, in consequence of the distance of those countries from Westminster. That being provided for, he could see no ground for departing from the principle laid down by Mr. Pitt of proceeding on the basis of population and contribution to taxation combined. With regard to the further question, as to the best mode of securing the representation of minorities —as to whether in towns where the population reached 500,000, the voter should be given five, six, or more votes, as to whether these towns should be treated as a whole or should be divided into districts, or what plan should be adopted, which would enable minorities to be represented, he would not dwell upon at that moment. He merely rose to express his hearty concurrence in the scheme of the Franchise Bill, as far as it had been explained by the Prime Minister, and to express his regret that it had been found impossible to enter into the question of redistribution at the same time.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, they should all bear in mind that this was a proposal to add 2,000,000 electors to the Register, on which there were at present 3,000,000. No greater change had ever been proposed to Parliament, for it amounted to a complete transfer of political power from those who had it now to another class who had it not. The Prime Minister had himself remarked, that before they made this change they should be satisfied that the persons to be enfranchised were capable. But what were they to be capable for? Were they to be capable of caring for their own interests, or for public and national interests? An Act was passed last year directed against the tendency, supposed to be inherent in human nature, of a man to take care of himself; and great care should be exercised that the franchise was not given to persons who were careless of all national questions. They desired to strengthen and broaden the foundations on which the Constitution rested. He would welcome any addition of sound materials to the foundation on which the English Constitution rested; but they were bound to examine the materials it was now proposed to build into this foundation. They had been told that it was vital and essential that England, Scotland, and Ireland should be treated with perfect equality. The hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had given good reasons why the principle of equality to England and Scotland should not be allowed to give a preference to Ireland. But what did equality mean as far as Ireland was concerned? It meant that there was to be an addition of 400,000 or 500,000 new electors to that country. Speaking of the conditions under which the new electors were to exercise the franchise, the Prime Minister said that the whole population whom he proposed to enfranchise had liberty of speech and of writing, liberty of meeting in public, and liberty of private association, privileges upon the existence of which our security depended. He listened to that portion of the Prime Minister's speech with the greatest interest and attention; but he could not see that it was applicable to the condition of Ireland at the present time. It appeared to him that there did not exist there at present liberty of speech, liberty of writing, or of public meeting, or private association; and the restriction of these liberties, in the opinion of the Prime Minister and a great many other Gentlemen, were necessary in order to make the best provision for the security of life and property in Ireland. Her Majesty's Government, in the time of the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, thought they could govern Ireland without these restrictions; but they discovered their mistake, and they found it necessary to restrict the liberty of the Irish people in all these particulars. Yet, in the absence of these necessary conditions, the Prime Minister claimed that by approving this measure the House would strengthen the Constitution and strengthen the fabric upon which public order rested. The proposal was to add some 450,000 persons to the Register, of whom 27,000 held less than 15 acres, 218,000 were rated at or under £4 yearly, and 196,000 were rated at £10 and under. He was one of those who deeply deplored the misery of the farming population in Ireland. They lived with difficulty. It had been asserted, over and over again, that even if they possessed in fee the farms they occupied they would be totally unable to obtain a decent livelihood. Was it, then, a statesmanlike proposal to add to the list of electors a number of persons who lived with extreme difficulty? The Census of Ireland told them that 25 per cent of the whole population were unable to read and write; and it might fairly be assumed that the proportion of persons who would be placed on the list of electors by the Bill would consist largely of illiterate persons. In Leinster that class amounted to 20 per cent, in Munster 28 per cent, in Ulster 20 per cent, and in Connaught 37 per cent. If these people became voters they must come under some influence or other. The Returning Officer who recorded their votes and many other persons would have the opportunity of practising great irregularity. Such electors would be likely to fall under the influence of those who promised them most. The House was very well acquainted with the opinions of Irish Members with respect to Home Rule, opinions which they advocated there with great ability and perfect frankness. But they desired a great deal more than that; their object was, in many cases, to benefit the population at the expense of those who, in their judgment, had oppressed them for a great many years. It had been stated that under the new franchise 90 seats would fall to their lot; and how would Parliament fare against a compact mass of 90 Members bent on the disintegration of the Empire and the confiscation of the property of the landlords of Ireland? The Prime Minister himself had expressed strong opinions on this subject. Speaking at Leeds, on October 17, 1881, he said—

> "Now that the Land Act has passed into law, and now that Mr. Parnell is afraid lest the people of England, by their long-continued efforts, should win the hearts of the whole of the Irish nation, he has a new and enlarged gospel of plunder to proclaim."

He described the then condition of things in these words—

> "I will frankly take the case of Mr. Parnell as exhibiting what I mean when I say that the state of things in Ireland is coming to a question of law on one hand and sheer lawlessness on the other."

It was upon the men to whom these utterances were addressed that the Prime Minister now proposed to bestow the franchise. Sir George Cornewall Lewis, writing upon the securities against the fallibility of political practice, said—

> "When men whose conduct is not under the influence of reason are invested with political power, those with whom they have to deal and those who are subject to their government are left in a state of utter uncertainty as to what they may expect. Where, again, the great body of any community are guided by violent and irrational counsels, and follow the advice of unwise leaders, it is impossible for a Government to anticipate how any measure, however beneficial in its tendency and however well meant by its authors, may be received."

There was very little doubt how the extended franchise would be exercised by voters in Ireland, the majority of whom now were hostile to the British connection; and the minority, who possessed the property, paid the taxes, and bore the burdens of government, would practically be trampled out. Could it be wise and statesmanlike to bring this about? It was surprising that the Government, who were responsible for the peace of the country, should have proposed such a measure. Everyone must know it would enormously increase our Parliamentary difficulties. He was amazed when he heard the Prime Minister say that it was not intended to reduce the number of Irish Members, and that it was a question whether the boroughs in the South of England should not furnish the increase required by Scotland, while it was possible that the total number of Members might have to be increased. It was said that the labours of the House had increased. The number of speeches had increased; and if the Prime Minister had not been in some difficulty he would hardly have proposed that the number of Members should be increased. Unfortunately, there were telegraphs and newspapers, and a silent Member was reminded by notes in a local newspaper that he was not doing justice to the importance of his constituency. If a Reform Bill was absolutely necessary for the despatch of Business, he should have said that it ought to have aimed rather at a reduction than an increase in the number of Members. On the 4th of December there appeared in *The Times* a statistical comparison of the claims of England, Scotland, and Ireland, based upon population and taxation; and from that it appeared clear that Ireland was not entitled to retain its present proportion of Members. It was said that greater distance from London gave a title to more Members; but did the distance of Ireland from London make Irish Members more capable of discharging the duties of Members of an Imperial Parliament and of taking a wide view of the responsibilities of the Empire? What was to be the effect on English politics, in which the majority of Irish Members did not profess to take an interest? What would be the action of this solid Party in the House of Commons? If they were 90 or 100 strong, would they not hold the scales between one Party and another in the struggle for power? Would it be to the advantage of the country that this Party should be increased, consolidated, and strengthened? That would be a formidable element in the government of this country. Therefore, we should come to this—that the Leader of the majority of the voters in Ireland would practically govern the Empire. It was avowed by hon. Members from Ireland that they intended to hold the scales and to determine the course of policy of the Government of this country. It would be unwise and foolish to give such a power, knowing perfectly well how it would be exercised. There would probably be a chaos of Parliamentary Business, and the Prime Minister of England would have the satisfaction of having done his best at the end of his great and marvellous career to make Parliamentary Government in England practically impossible. The right hon. Gentleman, it appeared, was not disposed to run the risk of overloading the ship. Well, he had heard of ships foundering from excessive deck-loading; but, as hon. Members knew, there were many more instances of foundering from improperly loading the ship. The right hon. Gentleman declined to put up any bulkheads or any partitions, or to say anything positive about redistribution; but he held out promises and expectations from which he could recede because they were not binding on the Government. But the stowing of the cargo was the very essence of the whole question. The hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) told the House that his constituency would be enormously increased, and so would the constituencies of South-East and South-West Lancashire. Where were they going to stow those 1,300,000 voters?—because if they made a wrong distribution of the weights they would incur serious danger. There were 42 boroughs with a population under 7,000, which returned 42 Members; 30 with a population under 10,000, which returned 30 Members; and 48 with a population under 20,000, which returned 72 Members. All these 144 Members must be affected by the measure which was to be proposed next year, if they should ever reach it. Well, the measure was proposed as regarded Ireland at a most inopportune moment. The question on which the House was embarking was probably the most grave that had ever occupied the attention of Parliament, and it required to be approached with the greatest possible deliberation. Why should Parliament be in a hurry to settle a question which certainly, having regard to the condition of Ireland, had come upon it at a most inopportune moment? They were told it would be madness to exclude Ireland. Then it would be madness to propose a measure which must include Ireland. This was an occasion when the House should rise above Party considerations, and should endeavour to maintain the stability and security of the institutions of the country, and to see that every class and every interest was duly represented, and that there should be no tyranny by any one class. He saw no provision for securing these ends. He saw no provisions whatever in the Bill for the security of peace and good order, or for the protection of the propertied and taxpaying classes, or any recognition of those great institutions which had grown up under the system under which we had lived for many years happily and prosperously, and which it should be the desire of every statesman to preserve.

Mr. GOSCHEN: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, when he introduced this Bill, stated that he would not detain the House at any length with regard to the arguments in favour of the admission of that large class to the franchise whom this Bill is calculated to bring within the pale of the Constitution. I will in all humility follow his example on a corresponding point. I will not attempt to detain this House by any repetition of arguments which I have previously used, as to the capacity or incapacity of any particular class to be enfranchised and to receive the privilege of voting. There are two classes to whom this Bill is to apply—the class of agricultural labourers, and the class of artizans living in the surburban parts of towns, who are, as is continually argued and admitted, precisely similar in character to the artizans who live upon the other side of the street. With regard to the admission of the agricultural labourers, I cannot say that I have changed my opinions; and I regret—I deeply regret—that the hope—I may say the ambition — which I had, that the agricultural labourer should be prepared for political duties by previous admission to civic duties through a system of local government, has not been able to be realized. The views which I held on that subject have never altered. I hold that the same educational process which has been gone through in the case of the voters in boroughs ought to have been brought into operation in the case of the agricultural labourers before they were admitted within the pale of the Constitution. With regard to the artizan class, I will not trouble the House with the arguments I used on an earlier occasion. It may be more interesting if I state very briefly the points on which I have modified my opinions with respect to that class, and make the admissions which I am prepared to make. It was in 1876 or 1877, if I remember rightly, that I made certain declarations of my opinions as to the attitude which the working classes would be likely to adopt towards economical questions, and I founded part of my argument as to the danger of admitting them upon that assumption. Now, I will candidly admit that events have occurred since that time which have made a deep impression upon my mind. Not many years ago there was a serious depression in trade, employment was reduced, wages were lowered, and there were not wanting men who were prepared to dangle as a bait before the working classes the revival of obsolete and exploded doctrines, which might have a plausible appearance, but were none the less thoroughly unsound. But the working man wanting work stood more bravely to his guns than the politician wanting power, and I must say that the attitude which the working classes then took must inspire us with some confidence in the attitude they will take in future. The sturdy language of their representatives at the Trades Union Congress, too, was in strong contrast with that of some politicians. While the former denounced those doctrines as obsolete and dangerous, there were not wanting politicians—even politicians in conspicuous positions—who were prepared to do the bidding of the working classes if they desired it, and to revive doctrines for which they had no harsher word than "pious opinions." There is another point which has made some impression upon my mind, and that is the general proceedings at the Trades Union Congresses, and I have been struck by the remarkable moderation of language which has been employed at those assemblies of working men, where they were free from outside influence, and where there was no one to bring pressure, as it were, upon them. I will make another admission. The argument against the enfranchisement of the working class was this—and, no doubt, it is a very strong argument—the power they would have in any election if they combined together on questions of class interest. We are bound not to put that risk out of sight. Well, at the last Election I carefully watched the various contests that were taking place, and I am bound to admit that I saw no tendency on the part of the working classes to combine on any special question where their pecuniary interest might be concerned. On the contrary, they seemed to me to take a genuine political interest in public questions, and I may say a more genuine political interest than the class immediately above them. Many hon. Members may remember that at the last Election the political life of a candidate who had ever dealt at a co-operative store was not worth a day's purchase. The traders took more interest in the withdrawal of Civil Servants from co-operative stores than in the withdrawal of the English garrison from Candahar. Among the masses, on the other hand, there was, I quite admit, a deep interest felt in a great many of the public questions of the day, and the contests were fairly fought out upon political and public grounds. The general course of events has been such that I think we may say that the working classes have given proofs that they are deeply desirous to do what is right, and that they have the sentiment of right and justice deeply implanted in them. They may frequently be in error; they may make mistakes; but, so far as we are able to judge of them, they have been actuated by a desire to do right. I have now stated with frankness the impression made upon my own mind since 1876 by certain political currents which I have watched. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that what one might have expected from a vast accession of one class to the franchise has happened, and that what I may call the powers of resistance to any popular demand has notably decreased both inside and outside the House. Can we expect that it should be otherwise; can we expect that we should almost change the balance of power, and place affairs of State almost at the discretion of an entirely new class, and not find a reflex of such an event in the attitude of Members and of constituencies? Now, we must always remember that the Act of 1867 was the work of a Conservative Government. The policy of Lord Beaconsfield has borne its fruit, and we have discovered that being whose existence was previously denied—namely, the Conservative working man. The Conservative working man has been proved to exist. He has been called into existence by the act of the Conservatives; he votes for Conservative men; but he coerces Conservative Members in a democratic direction. The whole attitude of the Conservative Party has been entirely changed, as it was certain to be, by the Act of 1867. I think hon. Members will, when they look around them and see the Members who sit among them from Lancashire, and others who represent large constituencies in boroughs, admit that they are totally different Conservatives from those whom we knew before the Act of 1867. ["No, no!"] I am looking simply at the question as a whole, and what I wish to prove is that there has been a change—a change for good or for evil; but let me hope it is for good—in the attitude of all Parties since 1867. You could not have wished to enfranchise all these classes without intending to be influenced by the wishes of those classes, and you have been influenced by them. It appears to me that it has come to this—that, feeling much more the contact of democracy, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite have lost the power of resistance to principles, though they are perfectly prepared to resist the application of those principles in the case of particular measures. They rather present the attitude of a body of rival practitioners, who are prepared to carry out the will of the people in competition with politicians on this side who advocate precisely the same principles. Since the Reform Bill of 1867 democracy has been making tremendous strides on both sides of the House—a triumph which hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House joyfully admit, and which Conservatives cannot deny. Now, I am afraid my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will say that I am at present upon the hill-tops of speculation, and that I ought to descend to practical points. I will, therefore, abandon my abstract reasoning, and give the House the concrete expression of what I mean when I refer to the anxiety which hon. Members here have felt since 1867 as to how they might stand in the opinion of the working classes. There are some Members in this House who were not here in the last Parliament; therefore they are not aware of the incident I am about to put before them. During the last Parliament there was introduced a Friendly Societies Bill, and an Amendment was moved upon that Bill by a Conservative Member for a large constituency. An hon. Member opposite—a Conservative Friend of mine—came to me and said—"Have you seen a very Socialistic Amendment put upon the Paper to the Friendly Societies Bill?" I replied that I had not seen it. He said the Amendment ought to be discussed. "Then," I asked, "why not block the Bill?" to which he replied—"I block the Bill? I dare not." I suggested that he should get some one of his Friends to block it. "No, I cannot find anyone," he said; and I then ventured to block the Bill myself. Never did I draw down a fiercer storm on my devoted head. We were then in Opposition, and I was told that I had blocked a Friendly Societies Bill in which 500,000 working men took the deepest interest, and that I was compromising the Party by the action I had taken. I pointed out that the Bill was against orthodox principles, but the reply was—"Never mind, the working classes take more interest in this Bill than in the

Eastern Question." That is a fair illustration of the influence which the apprehension of the action of the working classes has upon the minds of hon. Members in this House. If that was the case upon a small question, what would be the result if the working classes were really to put forward some demand of great importance upon which they wished to insist, but which a majority of this House considered ought to be resisted? And, now that I have given that concrete instance, I ask the House whether what I have described is not the very result which was to be expected from the Bill of 1867, which so displaced the whole centre of gravity of the Constitution? And now let me recall the attention of the House for a moment to a very few figures. How many Members are there in this House who remember the introduction of the Bill of 1866—a Bill introduced by the present Prime Minister? In that Bill the proposal was to make an addition to the borough electors in England and Wales of about 202,000 by a £7 franchise, and my right hon. Friend made an apology to the House, and contrasted those figures with the numbers that would have been introduced by a £6 franchise, which would have introduced 304,000 electors — a number considered unsafe at that time. My right hon. Friend explained to the House that there were already in the town constituencies 26 per cent of working men, or a number of working men who then enjoyed the franchise of about 126,000, and that a £6 franchise would raise that number to about 428,000 persons. My right hon. Friend said—

> "I should thus arrive at a gross total of 428,000 persons, which would, in fact, probably place the working classes in a clear majority upon the constituency. Well, that has never been the intention of any Bill proposed in this House. I do not think it is a proposal that Parliament would ever adopt."

Well, two Parliaments separate us from that declaration, when an addition of 302,000 electors was considered out of the question, because it would have given a clear majority to the working class in almost every constituency. My right hon. Friend went on to say—

> "I cannot say I think it would be attended with great danger, but I am sure it is not according to the present view or expectation of Parliament. And although, for my own part, I do not think that much apprehension need be entertained with respect to the working classes, even if admitted in larger numbers than we propose; yet I admit that, upon general grounds of political prudence, it is not well to make sudden and extensive changes in the depositories of political power."

Now, contrast with these figures — 200,000 and 300,000 — the figures to which we are now becoming accustomed. 900,000 electors were added in 1867 as the result of the competition of rival practitioners; and now, after having added 900,000 to the previous electorate, we are asked to add 1,300,000 electors in England and Wales to those who were there before. I have explained to the House the auspices under which I was first taught my duties as a reformer, and I must apologize to my right hon. Friend if I have retained some of the doctrine which was inculcated by his speeches at that time. To me it still seems doubtful, "on general grounds of political prudence," whether it is wise to make, without proper precautions, these great changes in the depositories of political power. I ask hon. Members to fix these figures and these dates plainly in the almanack of their minds. In 1866, rejection of the proposal to admit 300,000; adoption of the proposal to admit 200,000. In 1867, the proposal which admitted 900,000; and in 1884 a proposal to admit 1,300,000 more. If you put the addition of 1867 and the proposed new addition together, the new constituency emancipated by these two Bills will be larger than the whole constituency which existed before 1866—that is to say, that since 1866, by these two Bills, we shall have taken the power from the classes that previously enjoyed it, and placed it in the hands of an absolute majority who were not in the enjoyment of it before. What I maintain is that the number of voters inhabiting houses below £10 admitted in 1867, and proposed to be admitted now, will be a clear majority of all the voters, and that to their hands will be committed the future destinies of this country. While admitting the capacity of a great number of those who are to be enfranchised to exercise the vote, I cannot forget that in giving power to this new class you are taking the power almost entirely away from the other classes; and, while I admit that the Government are entitled to say that minorities should not always be able to render nugatory the will of the majorities, I hope that there are Members on both sides of the House who still hold that arrangements must be made by which the rights of minorities shall be secured and guaranteed. I do not propose to oppose the extension of the franchise, but I do hope that the Government will convince themselves that arrangements must be made by which those classes from whom power has been taken shall, nevertheless, be represented at the polling booth. These questions are not the questions of crotcheteers; they are not idle speculations; they are questions which must be faced with the utmost determination, for upon them the true representation of this country in the future must depend. I agree with my right hon. Friend that the representative system is the strength of the modern State; but the system must be a truly representative system. It must represent all classes, and there may be fear that a liberal enfranchisement of one class without any precautions will mean the taking away of representation from other classes. I can fancy that these 1,300,000 electors in England and Wales might be enfranchised, and that then, to use the significant words of the President of the Board of Trade, this newly-enfranchised class might be found "useful auxiliaries to determine the value of a man's vote afterwards." It appears to me that before those auxiliaries are given to my right hon. Friend all these questions ought to be considered. I feel confident that I am not running counter to the opinions of most hon. Members when I speak of the desire that minorities should be represented. In England it is said that the minority in one place represents the majority in another, and *vice versâ*. Can that same argument be applied to Ireland? Are we to hope that in Ireland the majority in one place will represent the minority in another, when we shall have added 400,000 electors to the 200,000 voters who at present elect Members in that country? If it is important in the case of England that minorities should be represented, I put it to the House in all earnestness whether it is not a still more important matter that under the new arrangements the loyal minority in Ireland should have a chance of making themselves heard? I believe that there will be a wish upon this side of the House as well as upon the opposite side that this consideration should not be put out of sight. I regret that by no single word in the speech of my right hon. Friend when he introduced this Bill were we led to the belief that that consideration had even entered into his mind. He did not seem to think that it would be necessary to take any precautions in the direction which I have indicated, and I saw no inclination or tendency on the part of my right hon. Friend to face the question which I have submitted. Ireland is going to gain by this Bill more than any other part of the United Kingdom. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members will admit that on this Reform Question it is an Arrears Bill as well as a Bill of enfranchisement for Ireland. We reduce the borough franchise from a £4 rating franchise; and what Ireland gains is not only the same extension as is gained in England, but the previous arrears, if I may use that expression, are made up. Well, there is a determination, it appears to me, on this side of the House, and one that is shared also to a certain extent by hon. Members opposite, that Ireland in this matter shall be treated in the same way as England, and that the boon of an extended franchise shall not be denied to her. I think it ought to be admitted that that is an act of tremendous courage. While we have Coercion Acts in Ireland, while we are occupying that country with a large number of troops, at the same time we are content to treble the number of the constituency. I will say nothing in opposition to that course; but when it comes to this point—that, besides that, Ireland is to have exceptionally favourable treatment in the redistribution of seats—then I can have no other language for such a proposal than that which was used by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I confess that I am astounded. The Government is going to steer an even keel as to the franchise; but that Ireland, under these circumstances, should be secured in a number of seats to which it is proved that she will not be entitled, and that that should be proposed now, is a matter which I am utterly unable to explain. And let me put to the House the embarrassing situation in which we are going to place ourselves. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has stated this as his personal view. He says he would not have submitted the programme of redistribution to which he alluded if he thought he would be in vital conflict with the Cabinet if he proposed it. Still, it was put forward as the personal view of my right hon. Friend. Now, I can quite believe that, after the declaration of my right hon. Friend, the Party which follows the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) will give a steady support to the Bill which is now before them. Relying on the pledge or the opinion of the Prime Minister, they will support the Bill. But when next year comes, supposing it should be the view of the Cabinet that Ireland ought not to receive exceptionally good treatment in this respect, in what position will the House and my right hon. Friend himself be placed? He is the Prime Minister. After value has been given in the shape of support, could my right hon. Friend then say that he could not carry out the promise? What would he have to say to his Cabinet? Might he not feel himself compelled to say—"I have given that pledge, and I, at least, must stand by it; and unless you support me I must retire." But I want to know more. I want to know, will the Liberal Party be prepared to back the Prime Minister? ["Hear, hear!"] I hear a few cheers from below the Gangway, but not a single cheer from above, nor from the Colleagues of my right hon. Friend who are sitting on the Treasury Bench. Now, Sir, the position will be an exceedingly difficult one. But supposing that another event, and not an impossible event, should happen—supposing there should be a Dissolution before the promise has been carried out? Are we, then—are the Liberal Party—to go to the country with that pledge which has been given, or a hint which has been thrown out, to the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that English boroughs are to be disfranchised in order to maintain intact the phalanx that follows that hon. Member? I desire to be straightforward about this. I say that I should oppose such a proposal. But are the Liberal Party, as a whole, going to accept the support of the Irish Party on this Bill with the pledge, or with the hint thrown out by their Leader, that the number of seats now possessed by Ireland is to be maintained? The Liberal Party, I say, ought to protest now if they do not mean to give that support, because otherwise they might do what I would not do to any antagonist or opponent—they might lead hon. Members opposite from Ireland into a position in which I should not like to see any Members of this House placed—that is to say, of believing that they had been deceived. I can anticipate the language which hon. Members opposite coming from Ireland would use if, after they had voted for the Bill, hon. Members who had meanwhile sat silently by were to repudiate this promise that the present number of Irish seats is to be maintained intact, and declared that it was not to be kept. They would naturally tax the Liberal Party, and tax it not unjustly, with a breach of faith. I shall not now argue the question of this exceptionally favourable treatment of Ireland, further than to say that it appears to me the injustice to England will be an injustice increasing from year to year, because the population of England is increasing continually, while the population of Ireland is stationary, if not diminishing. Therefore the injustice, if it is an injustice now, will be an injustice growing from year to year. As for the argument of my right hon. Friend, that it was not so necessary to increase the number of Members from Scotland, because the Scotch constituencies send up such shrewd Members to Parliament——

Mr. GLADSTONE: Pardon me; that was not my argument. I said no such thing. If my right hon. Friend chooses to quote me he might quote me correctly. I distinctly and strongly laid down elsewhere, as well as here, that the doctrine of distance is to be taken into account as well.

Mr. GOSCHEN: My right hon. Friend will forgive me; but I remember distinctly that he spoke of the shrewdness of the Scotch Members also. It struck me at the time that the Members from Ireland were equally shrewd; and as to the argument of distance, it appears to me that an argument might be made out on the same principle that Scotland should receive even more Members in proportion to her population. In any case, the argument of distance will not hold. But I would ask my hon. Friends on this side of the House whether they have the feeling in their minds that, after all, it may have been wise on the part of my right hon. Friend to make the suggestion which I have condemned?—because otherwise there might have been an opposition to this Bill, which hon. Members have so much at heart—an opposition which might have compromised it, and the Irish Party would have seen their way, as they so often do on other occasions, to make it impossible to carry this Bill, unless they had received such a declaration as I suggest. Well, if that is in the minds of hon. Members of this House, I would ask—Is it, then, already come to this—that the Irish Party in this House is so strong that on an Imperial question not affecting Ireland alone, but affecting the United Kingdom, we cannot proceed upon the principle of equal treatment and doing justice all round without taking into account the opposition that might be made by the Irish Members? Is it already necessary, in order to conciliate them, that such exceptional treatment, such a promise to maintain their rights, should be made at so inconvenient a moment? And, I ask, if this is their power now, on an Imperial Bill, what will be their power when they come back to this House, not only reinforced by the numbers which they will gain from the extension of the franchise, but through the very numbers that my right hon. Friend proposes to take from England in order to maintain the number of Irish Members intact? I must render my humble tribute as an antagonist to the daring strategy of hon. Members opposite. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is the proposal of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Ireland and the distribution of seats, and I would now wish very briefly to touch some points with regard to the further questions connected with redistribution and the argument of my right hon. Friend. My right hon. Friend wished that no question of redistribution should be tacked on to this Bill; and he has used an argument which is, no doubt, a plausible argument, that in 1866 it was more necessary than now to tie the two Bills together. At all events, he says, there was then a reason for such a course which does not exist now, because the disfranchisement of a borough then meant the disfranchisement of individual electors; whereas now the electors will have a vote for the county even if they lose it for the borough. I do not remember that the argument was used in 1866. This argument rests upon that apparently fundamental principle of my right hon. Friend which is that what we have to consider in these debates is the right of the individual rather than the result to the State. It is this right of the individual which would have suffered in 1866. I remember that Lord Derby at the time made what was always called "an unanswerable speech," proving that the two Bills ought to be treated together. I have read his speech through, and I do not find that he alluded in a single sentence to any argument such as that which has been put before us. The objection at that time was a tactical objection. The defence of the Government for separating the Bills—and I know that I had to take part in the defence myself—was that there were tactical objections to bringing the two Bills forward together; but they were not questions of principle. The argument of Lord Derby related mainly to the redistribution of seats, and the kind of Party manœuvres that might be expected if the two Bills were not treated together. I am prepared now to contend that much greater interests are at stake than simply the question whether one town or another is to be disfranchised. My right hon. Friend treated the representation of minorities as being tacked on, more or less, as a sort of excrescence to the subject of the franchise. It does not belong to the franchise question, but it is rather a part of the question of redistribution of seats. It belongs to that process which is to ascertain what is to be the value of a man's vote when you have given him that vote. And upon that the whole result of the redistribution of political power in the future may depend. Therefore, it is on this question, and not on the mere redistribution of seats—it is on the decision as to what vote you will give to the newly-enfranchised electors that the really important question of the future depends. We all admit—Conservatives and Liberals—that it is necessary boldly to disfranchise a large number of the small boroughs. But the greater and graver issue comes, when you have to assign these Members to large constituencies. Are you going to give three, or more than three, Members to large towns; and if you are going to do so, upon what principle will you allow the voters to vote? Because upon the answer to this problem will depend whether minorities in the future are to be represented, and that is a point upon which it is far more important to have a declaration from Her Majesty's Government than about any of the questions upon which my right hon. Friend submitted his personal opinion. Before these discussions close I hope that other Members of the Government will also submit to us their personal views upon these subjects, which will have such momentous effects in the future. For my own part, what I feel is this—I do not, as a humble Member of the House, call upon the Government to tie the two Bills together, a proceeding which my right hon. Friend says would destroy the Franchise Bill. I do not wish to obstruct the Franchise Bill. As I have said, I do not wish Her Majesty's Government to tie the two Bills together; but I do wish, in the course of these debates, to know what is in the mind of the Cabinet—what is the tendency of the Cabinet with regard to such vital questions as to how minorities are in future to be heard, and how they propose to prevent the total disfranchisement of the loyal classes in Ireland? I should wish to hear from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War to what extent he endorses the views which have been put forward with regard to the sacrifice of English seats for the purpose of keeping up the number of Irish Representatives? If the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had been the last word, if there were no other hope to be given to us that Her Majesty's Government would face the problems which I have endeavoured imperfectly to put before the House, I confess that I should feel it my duty to oppose this Bill at every stage. If, on the other hand, I can see in the declarations to be made in the course of these debates by my right hon. Friend himself and his Colleagues that they intend to grapple with these difficulties, and that if there is a Dissolution—a contingency which we cannot put out of sight—before they can carry their Redistribution Bill, they will place before the country a moderate programme in accordance with that which has been sketched out by the Prime Minister, then I can conceive that one might support this Bill. I do not know if I explain myself clearly. I say that I want to have securities from Her Majesty's Government that they will accompany their Bill with precautions that will insure safety as to the points on which I have insisted. I look to them to secure that safety; and having no doubt as to their sincerity, I believe that if they declare their intention to do so they will take such precautions. I think it is well that the question of the franchise should be settled, and, if possible, that both the franchise and redistribution should be settled by the present Parliament. My right hon. Friend spoke of the deck cargo which might lead to the foundering of the ship. Another right hon. Member took up the simile, and spoke of the stowing of the cargo. Let me continue the simile. When I was at the Admiralty one of the first lessons I learnt was that when there was a fresh distribution of weights in a ship which was being rebuilt it was the paramount duty of those who were responsible for her safety, when sent to sea, to calculate afresh the centre of gravity and the angle of vanishing stability. Gigantic new engines are being put into the old hull of the British Constitution. I believe the hull is strong enough to bear them; for of stouter or more seasoned stuff has never craft been built; but those who will be responsible for the seaworthiness of the reconstructed ship would, it appears to me, be reckless to a crime if before they sent her to face the perils of the sea they had not made themselves absolutely sure that no change in the weights had shifted dangerously the centre of gravity, and that she would still preserve a sufficient reserve of stability to prevent her heeling over to the angle of danger under any pressure of wind or waves.

Mr. PARNELL: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), in enumerating the advantages likely to arise if Ireland were included in the present Bill, spoke of the unfortunate habit belonging to Governments of being desirous to remain in Office; but he forgot to include also the unfortunate habit which belongs to the Opposition of being desirous to come into Office. When I was listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman I thought I was listening to a speech delivered in opposition to a proposition for repealing the Union—for establishing an Irish Parliament—or one delivered in support of a proposition for disfranchising Ireland entirely. I can understand the position of the right hon. Gentleman if he thinks that Ireland ought not to be represented in this House at all; and I should consider that, having regard to his antecedents, and the antecedents of his Party, and their declarations from time to time, he and his Party would take up a consistent position if they took advantage of the present Franchise Bill to ask Parliament to exclude Ireland entirely from Parliamentary representation, and to govern her as a Crown Colony. But I cannot understand the position of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Goschen), who has frequently asked this House to look upon Ireland as if it were just as much a part of the United Kingdom as Yorkshire is, when he says that while not opposing—or, at all events, not strongly opposing—the extension of household suffrage to the counties of England, he, at the same time, vehemently declines, above all things, to include Ireland in the same measure which he is willing to give to England and Scotland. One would think that, as the result of the inclusion of Ireland in the present Bill, the laws to be made in future for Ireland would be entirely made by the Members from Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of life and property being placed at the mercy of the majority of the people of Ireland if this Bill be passed; but he assuredly forgets that, at the outside, the quota from Ireland only consists of 103 Members, and that there would still be more than 500 English and Scotch Members, a majority of whom it would be necessary to bring over to our view of the question before we could pass a single measure in reference to the franchise; and after that the right hon. Gentleman has an additional guarantee in the existence of the House of Lords to act as a still further check and safeguard against the revolutionary designs which he has been pleased, on this occasion, to attribute to us. Now, what is the real extent of this terrible innovation and change which is so much deprecated in the two able speeches we have just listened to? According to the most careful calculations which have been made by those best acquainted with the probabilities of the next General Election, it is estimated that without any extension of the present franchise, and with the limited suffrage which at present exists in Ireland, we shall be able to return Members who agree with us in opinion about 70 strong. According to the estimate which has been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), we should be able to return, if the present Bill passes, 90 Members. I am not inclined to think that we should carry as many seats as that; but, assuming the calculation of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to be correct, and taking his own figures as the substantiation of his own case, the addition to the strength of what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) promises the Party of revolution in this House would be 15 all told; and I scarcely think that such a small result as that, even admitting the contentions of those who oppose the Bill so far as it relates to Ireland, will induce the Liberal Party or the people of England to do a deliberate act of injustice, and to add another deliberate injustice to Ireland, by refusing those Constitutional rights to the Irish people of which they are at present deprived. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) spoke of the question of redistribution; and I think he almost entirely assumed, as the basis on which he stood the rest of his case, that if the course indicated by the Prime Minister, when the question of redistribution comes to be dealt with, were adopted, England would be placed at a very strong disadvantage; and Ireland, as compared with England, on the basis of relationship and on the basis of the possible number of electors, would have a much larger number of electors than she is entitled to. I have read the letter written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) to one of the London newspapers, in which he calculates—and I do not doubt that upon this calculation the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) bases his argument—that Ireland, according to the number she would have as an electorate under this Bill, is only entitled to 81 Members. Now, I do not think that that would be found to be the case, and I will take the figures. Of course, any statement with regard to the probable number of constituents under the action of this Bill, either in Ireland or England, can only be approximate. The Prime Minister put it at 400,000; the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) put it at 600,000. [MR. GIBSON: No; 500,000.] To be strictly accurate, I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman said 550,000, and by a simple rule-of-three sum—taking the figures of the right hon. and learned Gentleman as those which are most likely to be correct, and I am inclined to think they are more correct than those of the Prime Minister—if you will calculate the proportion of Members who ought to belong to an electorate of 550,000, and the proportion which ought to belong to the electorate which this Bill proposes to give in England, you will find that, as regards Ireland, a very small reduction, probably no more than six or seven, would have to be made; and if you calculate on the basis of the present population, you can only claim a similar reduction of about six or seven —a reduction which even the most ardent supporters of the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Goschen) would consider to be altogether inadequate for the House to trouble their heads about. I doubt very much, when the time comes for estimating the number of Members to be given to the three countries respectively, whether it will be found, either on the basis of population or on the numbers to be added to the constituencies of the three countries, that you will be entitled to deprive Ireland of more than six or seven of her Members. I would put it to the House whether it would be worth while to violate the Act of Union, which was a Treaty entered into by the Representatives of the English and Irish nations, as far as the two countries can be said at that time to have had any Representatives at all, for the mere purpose of showing your spite against Ireland by taking away from her the paltry number of six or seven Members. Now, Sir, it is admitted on all hands that the Irish system of registration and the Irish franchise is an utter sham, and that it cannot be said to represent at all the great mass of the people. In fact, the Members for Ireland returned here are returned by an exceedingly select constituency; such a constituency as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) might be supposed, from the nature of his speech, to consider a sort of ideal constituency for England. To show the difference between the number of persons entitled to exercise the franchise in England and Ireland respectively—of course, there is a very great discrepancy in the borough franchise, which is the lowest franchise in England, the county franchise being much higher—let me take the case of five English towns approaching in population five of the Irish towns. Sheffield has a population of 284,000, and there are over 43,000 electors; while Dublin, with a population of 273,000, or within 10,000 of Sheffield, has only 13,000 electors, or less than one-third that of Sheffield. Blackburn, with a population of over 100,000, has 14,000 electors; Cork, with a population of 104,000, has only 4,700 electors. Chatham, with a population of 46,000, has 5,826 electors; Limerick, with a population of 48,000, has only 1,900 electors. Newcastle-on-Tyne, with a population of 145,000, has 24,000 electors; Belfast, with a population of 208,000, has only 21,000. And while Aylesbury, with a population of 28,000, has over 4,000 electors, Londonderry, with a population of 29,000, has only 2,000 electors. The same disproportion is evident all through; and if hon. Members will, for themselves, occupy their time by going a little into the question, they will find that the general result of the proportion of Parliamentary electors to the population in all the English boroughs is one in 7½, or 13¼ per cent; whereas in the Irish boroughs it is one in 15½, or less than 6½ per cent. If you take the whole of the population of the two countries, including boroughs and counties, into the calculation, it will be found that in England the proportion of electors to population is 10 per cent, whereas in Ireland it is only 4¼ per cent. In fact, with your present franchise in England, if you were to stand still, and if you were to bring in a separate Bill for the purpose of enlarging the franchise in Ireland, so as to make it equal to that which at present exists in England, you would only be doing the merest act of justice to Ireland—an act which the Liberal Party has frequently pledged itself to do in this, and the last, Parliament. But in the course of this debate it seems that Parliament has been asked to pursue its road of injustice towards Ireland still further by enlarging the franchise in England beyond what it is at present, and thus increasing the inequality which exists between England and Ireland. But, perhaps, unforeseen results might flow from the passing of this Franchise Bill. I have said that the Irish Members are not really the Representatives of the people of Ireland, but that they are the Representatives of a very select constituency indeed, being, practically speaking, the Representatives of the middle classes. May it not happen, by the creation of fresh political interests in that country, and by the bringing in of the masses of the people within the pale of the Constitution, that you may create differences of opinions, and divisions in the Party lines which do not at present exist. In any case, it is admitted that one of the great evils regarding the political state of Ireland is, that there are only two interests—the interest of a very small minority of the people who live here, as opposed to the agricultural interests of the majority of the middle classes of that country. It may happen, as it has happened in England by the creation of fresh interests, and by the admission of new classes, that you may create a counterpoise to the very excessive, as some people consider it, tension, which the Irish farmers have been demanding of late years from the Legislature. I do not say what my own opinion is; but if you are to govern Ireland constitutionally—if you are to govern her under a representative system—if you are going still to permit her Members to come here and represent the Irish constituencies in this House—you cannot, with the slightest show of consistency, and with the slightest scrap of self-respect, deny her the same franchise as that which you claim for this country. For my own part, I believe that the interests with which we who sit upon these Benches have been prominently identified within the last few years will survive even such injustice as that I have shown, and that our forces will be very slightly increased by this very important measure. I believe that the real reason why hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House are opposing this measure is not because they fear that it will lead to a disproportion and to too great an increase of political power among the Irish Nationalists, but because they fear it will strengthen the Radical and the Liberal Party to such an extent as to render their own exclusion from political power permanent; and they, therefore, make such appeals to passion and to prejudice in this country as they think may be effectual for their purpose. They are, in reality, fighting under the Irish problem—the extension of political privileges to the mass of the English people of this country. It is really their power in the counties which they believe to be threatened, and not the disintegration of the Empire, or the dissolution of all things in Ireland into their original elements. I believe we shall find, as the discussion of this Bill proceeds, that that design will become more and more evident, and that the great attack will, after a time, be developed—the feint of the present proceeding having been abandoned as useless and absurd. In support of my contention, while I say that we do not own that this measure, as regards our own position and prospects, will lead to such an increase in our forces as may be necessary for our purposes, in the next General Election, even under the present most imperfect system of registration, I wish to point out that in every contest which has taken place since the General Election, for any seats which we won at the General Election, we have been uniformly victorious by considerable and increased majorities. We have carried four seats, in addition, from the Liberal Party. Fourteen contests have resulted in the return of 14 professed Home Rule Members; four contests for four seats carried by followers of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister at the General Election have resulted also in the return of Members of our Party; and we have only been beaten in four constituencies, where we never had at any time a footing; and in each case we have been beaten by the Conservative Party. In reality, it is not so much the Irish Conservatives who have to fear the loss of their power or the loss of their seats by this Bill, as the followers of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself, the proposer of this Bill; because I believe it would leave the power of the Conservatives in the North and other portions of Ireland, where they hold seats, very much as it is; but it would enable the seats held by the followers of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to be successfully attacked. I think this fortifies my contention that the opposition now being made against this Bill is really a feint, and is intended to conceal the real objects of those who oppose the measure, and who hope, by trading on ignorant prejudices and passions, to prevent the enfranchisement of the mass of the English people. For ourselves, we are confident of the result. We accept our inclusion in the Bill as a measure of equity to which we are entitled. We should have been very much surprised if the Prime Minister, with his record, and if his Party had tolerated any other course than that which has been adopted; but whether we are to be included in this Bill, or whether we are not to be included in it, we feel confident in the justice of our cause, and in the devotion of our people, who will enable us to carry to a triumphant conclusion the principles which we stand here to maintain. As regards the rest, I have every confidence that this House will refuse to be made a party to the perpetration of what would be neither more nor less than an outrage on the unenfranchised people of Ireland, if they are to go back upon the declaration of the Prime Minister, and to shut the door of the Constitution in the face of the people of our country.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the House may be sure that I do not rise to supplement the statement of the Prime Minister. My right hon. Friend's exposition of the Bill was made with great fulness; and I think, whether hon. Gentlemen approve or disapprove of the measure, none of them can mistake what is in it. But I rise simply to reply, on behalf of the Government, to certain remarks made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen during this debate, and to those remarks I shall strictly confine myself. On the first day of the debate one thought appeared to run through all the speeches which were made from the Benches opposite—namely, that the affairs of this country were in such a serious condition that the present was no time for introducing changes into the Constitution. The hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), first of all, gave a list of our foreign undertakings. The hon. Member told us that something was going on on the Congo, and something at Madagascar, and that there was a hitch in the Commercial Treaty with Turkey; and he asked whether this is the time to make organic changes at home? Why, Sir, the hon. Member's argument—and it was an argument which was used largely on the first day of the debate—simply amounts to this—that the people who have business abroad should not attend to business at home. Would there ever be a time when this country is not likely to have some business abroad; and till such time arrives, are we to be content with the exclusion from the rights of citizenship of a part of our population?—an exclusion in favour of which no hon. Gentleman opposite on either of the two days' debate has offered one direct reason, unless it is that they have cheered some of the observations of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in a very powerful speech, told us that we ought not to meddle with Reform, because we have on hand a Bill for the protection of our herds and flocks from disease; and the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill)—with an unusual superabundance of that imaginative faculty which does so much to light up our debates—added that our oxen are dying by thousands and tens of thousands. Sir, all the incidents of the Reform Campaign of 1866-7 are imprinted on my mind as deeply as they are likely to be imprinted on the mind of one who had the privilege of entering Parliament during that campaign; and I cannot forget that there then was a cattle plague to which the remarks of the noble Lord might be applied without any exaggeration. That was, indeed, one of the reasons that were given for delaying, and eventually destroying, Lord Russell's Bill of 1866; but I doubt very much whether the events of the succeeding Session went to show that the English people were willing to be baulked of a great extension of their civil rights because they happened to be engaged in staving off the cattle plague. But everybody who spoke from the Benches opposite on the first day of this debate alleged that the events at Suakin and in the Soudan were of such gravity that we could not attend to the reform of our Constitution. They told us that we had sent out an expedition in great force, and that a great number of troops had been sent to the vicinity of the Red Sea. Now, this is not the first expedition which has been sent to the vicinity of the Red Sea. Early in the Session of 1867 it began to be evident that we were going to have a great difficulty with Abyssinia; and, in fact, an expedition was sent out, which was about three times as large as that which had just gained the triumph upon the details of which we were all dwelling this morning—an expedition of enormous force, and an expedition which we were told was to cost £4,000,000, and which did actually cost £9,000,000. While the former expedition was in certain prospect; while it was on the seas and on the march; while it was in battle; and while it was returning, no less than four Reform Bills of extreme importance were being carried through the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The Minister who introduced those Bills was the late Earl of Beaconsfield, who, I venture to assert, would have said that the fact of our having such a military expedition on hand was no reason why a Bill for effecting internal reform should not be introduced. He would have said at once that that was not a sort of argument that ought to be accepted by an English statesman. But every hon. Member who has spoken in this House on both days of the debate has referred to another country with which I am much more concerned than with Egypt —I mean Ireland. The Government are asked whether Ireland is in a state in which we could wish to bring about a change in the representation? Early in the debate we were asked why we did not occupy ourselves in bringing Ireland to the same state of quiet and freedom from crime and outrage as that in which it was during the late Administration? Now, this question shows pretty clearly that hon. Members do not often carefully study facts and figures, when those facts and figures do not serve their purpose. If hon. Members would carefully study the statistics of Irish crime—and they made great use of them when the story was a great deal blacker—they would find results which would make them stare. During the last six months of the late Government there were 688 outrages; during the six months terminating at the end of February last there were only 354. Exclusive of threatening letters, during the last six months of the late Government, there were 357 very serious outrages; during the last six months there have been only 183, or about one-half. Therefore, if the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt) imposes on us the condition that crime and outrage should be reduced to the point at which it stood under the late Government, I think that the present Government have fulfilled that preliminary condition, and that we may deal with the Irish franchise on the ground of its own merits. The powerful speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was founded upon an idea which was put into a definite shape in a letter written by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster). The pith of that letter was that, according to the facts he had examined, the 103 Irish Members ought to be reduced to 81. Now, my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) is looked up to by the country as a great authority upon political questions. The Irish people have a very keen sense of justice and injustice in their own affairs, and they are an extremely quick and clever people in the discussion of political questions, as I have only too good reason every day to know; and any statement by a leading English statesman which is fraught with injustice to Ireland goes through the country like lightning, and makes a very deep impression. It is necessary for me, therefore, to say that the calculation of the right hon. Gentleman is entirely and utterly erroneous; and I will give my own idea of what the facts are which have misled the right hon. Gentleman. The population of the United Kingdom, at the last Census, was 34,880,000, excluding the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. The right hon. Gentleman gave the number of Members at 652; consequently, the number of Members in proportion to population would be one to 53,500. In Ireland, at the last Census, the population was 5,170,000; consequently, the proportion of Members, at the last Census, would be not 81, but 97, a very different figure. [Mr. GIBSON: There are fewer now; less than 5,000,000.] I admit that the population has decreased slightly; but if the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) thinks that Ireland would be satisfied with fewer Members than she was entitled to at the last Census, the right hon. and learned Gentleman's experience of the Irish Office differs very much from my own. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) took in his calculation not the population, but the electors. It appears that the Prime Minister said that the Returns for Ireland showed over 400,000.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I did not use that expression. It was used by my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen).

MR. TREVELYAN: That is what I say; and the right hon. Gentleman quoted this expression "over" in the earlier part of his letter; but in making his calculation he left it out.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The word "over" was applicable to all three Kingdoms.

MR. TREVELYAN: I am quite aware of that fact. I am putting that reservation in order to save the accuracy of the Prime Minister in making a somewhat rhetorical sentence; but I am myself going to give the exact figures. The Prime Minister is a master of oratory, and I never understood that a master of oratory used in his peroration any other than round numbers. The hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) to-day told us that Mr. Pitt, when allotting Members at the time of the Union, said that England had three or two and a-half times the population of Ireland. Now, that was a generation which was easily satisfied with Parliamentary figures. But we have to be more correct, and the right hon. Gentleman will find that by leaving out the word "over" in his calculation he has made a misstatement of the case as serious as we all know it must have been entirely unintentional. Now, the method of calculating the numbers of householders to be admitted to the franchise is as follows:—the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) asked for figures and statistics. With regard to a great and large measure of this sort, we can only give large and general figures. The Earl of Beaconsfield brought in a very large measure indeed, and the Earl of Beaconsfield gave no figure, but made his calculations on the Returns of inhabited houses as compared with the Returns of voters, and the Earl of Beaconsfield was quite right. This calculation is founded by deducting one-quarter from the number of inhabited houses in the country districts, and in this manner the proper number of voters who would be on the Register under the household franchise can be got at. From these deduct the number of voters who are at present on the Registration List as occupiers, and what remains is the result which you wish to arrive at. In Scotland the inhabited houses are 409,000; deducting a quarter the result is 306,000 as the number of voters on the Register; and deducting, again, 56,000 as the number of voters on the Register as occupiers, the result will be 250,000, or "over 200,000," as the Prime Minister said in that sentence which has been referred to. Take four of the boroughs which the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) referred to—East Retford, New Shoreham, Cricklade, and Aylesbury—which most resemble counties of all the borough districts now enjoying the household franchise. In the aggregate they contain 45,700 inhabited houses and 26,600 voters, so that the deduction of one-fourth in that case is singularly accurate. In Ireland, exclusive of the boroughs, there are 784,000 inhabited houses; deducting 196,000, we have 588,000, and if we deduct 154,000 now enjoying the occupation franchise we have 434,000 left, or over 400,000. According to the right hon. Gentleman's calculations, there would be one Member for 8,000 electors; and, as I have already sdown, Ireland, instead of 81 Members, would have 85. But Ireland has not yet got household suffrage in the boroughs, although this Bill would give it. After this Bill has passed there would be, according to the proportion of houses, 99,000 voters in the Irish boroughs. There are now 51,000 rated occupiers, and, consequently, about 48,000 voters in the boroughs; and, according to the right hon. Gentleman's calculation, six more Members on that account, which, added to 85, would give Ireland 91, instead of 81. If we base our calculations on the number of electors, we are still short by six of the number which Ireland has in proportion to her population. I may explain the difference between 91 and 97 in this manner, and I think that what I am now going to say is quite unanswerable. In England, Wales, and Scotland there are 584,000 persons in the counties who enjoy the franchise on account of property, and not on account of occupation. In Ireland the number is just over 10,000. These people, under this Bill, would suffer a remarkable change. With scarcely an exception they would all become plural voters. They would have a vote on account of property, almost all of them being householders, and they would have a vote for occupation on the Register; but they would only vote as one. Now, while it may be quite right and just that these people should have a double vote, it is, in the highest degree, unjust that Ireland should have fewer Members allotted to her, because there must be on the Register not a larger number of voters, but a larger number of persons having two votes. The right hon. Gentleman, perhaps, did not consider it in this light. Till I hear from his own lips, I shall feel satisfied that he still thinks that counties should have Members either in proportion to their population, or in proportion to their resident householders.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say that I merely took the Prime Minister's figures, and supposed he was really adding the number of electors in the constituencies.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I accept the explanation, and I will endeavour to explain this important matter in such a way as to show that my right hon. Friend made his calculation on a basis which he thought was perfectly correct, and I have endeavoured to reply to him entirely without any sort of animus. I sincerely trust that I have said nothing that can possibly be supposed to alter the feelings I have always borne towards him. On the main question of extending the franchise to Ireland, much has been said to-day of a very strong character, and much has been said in reference to the future. As a matter of fact, you can only take two courses in this matter. You can refuse the extension of the franchise in England and Scotland, because you will not extend it to Ireland. Will you seriously contend that England and Scotland should wait for what is their right, and for what no one denies to be their right, until hon. Members opposite assent? I have dealt with this question in this House for 10 years, and nobody has ever denied it to be their right. Until hon. Gentlemen opposite are willing to persuade themselves that Ireland is fit for the franchise, are England and Scotland to wait? I cannot conceive a more insufficient answer to the householders of the English counties than this proposal to defer their claim to the franchise, because we cannot give it to Ireland. The other course is to give the franchise to England and Scotland, and to refuse it to Ireland. We have been asked in many speeches whether Ireland is contented under a Coercion Bill? If Ireland is not contented now, is she likely to be more contented when debarred from the exercise of a right which has been extended to England and Scotland? It is the opinion of the Government that such a distinction between the two Islands would stimulate and justify Irish discontent. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) spoke of a divided Party. Now, I cannot speak for the Cabinet; but I have the same right as hundreds of other men to speak for the Party, and I never knew a more spontaneous or more unanimous feeling upon our Benches as to the justice of the policy that this Bill should be extended to Ireland. My own personal experience of Ireland, and the much longer experience of Lord Spencer, has led us to believe that the difficulties of that country would not be increased by the extension of the franchise, but that they would be slowly and surely diminished. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the increase in the number of Nationalists who would be returned under the new franchise, and the terrible numbers he gave caused a perfect panic among a few hon. Gentlemen opposite. Has he ever considered how many Members would be returned under the existing franchise if we had a Dissolution to-morrow? The English people should remember that they must compare what Ireland should be under the new franchise, not with what it is now, but what it would have been if the Vote of Censure had been carried the other day. In my opinion, the difference between the new and the old franchise would make very little difference, indeed, in the numbers of this Party or of that; but it will make this difference—that they will come to this House as the Representatives of the nation, and not of a class. I can understand you refusing to Ireland

Representative Government; but how can you think it possible to rule Ireland by docking her representation in the way that has been suggested? Amidst all the difficulties and dangers of Ireland there is only one course by which success could even be remotely gained; and that is, while steadily preserving the public peace of the country, to import into Ireland all the privileges and rights which you enjoy in this part of the United Kingdom. That is the view of the Irish Government; and if hon. Gentlemen opposite can persuade Parliament and the country that it is the wrong view they can come in and try another course. So long as we are allowed to remain at the head of affairs, we are certainly not going to throw that view overboard in regard to the most important measure which has been introduced into this Parliament. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) complained that redistribution was not dealt with in this Bill, and he added that he thought the course adopted by the Government most inconvenient and mischievous. But it is not at all inconvenient, except for those hon. Gentlemen who do not wish to see the Bill passed. It is a most convenient course for those who do want to see it passed. At present it is the object of the Government to bring within the full pale of citizenship the great number of people who have had hopes held out to them for a long time—who appreciate those hopes; and the only way to do this is to bring this Bill before Parliament, and call upon Parliament to pass it. If the Government succeed in passing it, they would be bound to bring in a measure of redistribution. If the Government fail with this Bill, then, as a Government, they would not bring in any further measure at all. The Prime Minister, the other night, was, as everyone who heard him must confess, very frank and candid in this matter. He put the Bill upon motives of high public expediency. He said he did not bring in a Bill dealing with redistribution together with the franchise, because if he did both would fail; and I feel pretty sure that there are few people who want to extend the suffrage to the county householder who will quarrel with the Prime Minister's procedure. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) stated the other night that this would only be a settlement that would last for five years at the outside. Now, the Bill of 1832 was a most limited measure, which set up a privileged electorate, yet it settled matters for about 35 years. The Bill of 1867, which was a half-and-half measure if ever there was one, because it gave a very extensive franchise to half of the country, and refused it to the other, nevertheless has settled matters for 18 years. This Bill is neither a limited nor a half-and-half measure, and if it is passed I expect that no man living will be troubled with the question of the franchise again. This Bill takes in all the householders of the country, and, leaving aside the question of sex, it settles everything else on a solid and permanent basis. This Bill admits everybody who should be admitted. I think the House must have been pleased to hear the generous terms in which the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) spoke of the service franchise, describing it as it appeared to a country gentleman living on his property, and thinking of what a very respectable class of voters to the service franchise would admit. But it must not be forgotten that it will admit, likewise, miners, and the great body of the North country and Scotch shepherds and hinds, men who in respectability, thrift, ability, and solid interest in public affairs, are inferior to no part of the population of the United Kingdom. It admits those who should be admitted, and it excludes all who should be excluded. We have very long been bandying to and fro between the two great political Parties charges about the manufacturing of faggot votes. Well, Sir, that manufacture will, to a very great extent—perhaps as much as can be secured by legislation—cease in the future. I remember, when the Reform Bill of 1867 was introduced, that this question of faggot voting was brought before the House; and on that occasion Mr. Ward Hunt, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, said that the Liberals in this respect were no better than the Conservatives. His words were—"What hypocrites we all are." This Bill, then, will enable both Liberals and Conservatives to show that they are not hypocrites in intention, by confining the franchise to the real owners of property and the real occupiers in a district.

Finally, the right hon. Gentleman complains that this Bill does not even claim to rest on a principle. He asks whether it rests on the principle that taxation should be united to representation; he asks whether it rests on the principle that the franchise is a right? Now, Sir, I am not going to take up the fiscal question, and I am not going to enter into the question as to whether or not the franchise is a right. I prefer to take up solid ground, every inch of which we have fought over and over again, and to say that this Bill is founded on the principle of what the Prime Minister calls the admission of capable citizens. Last year I put forward the same theory in other words, saying that the vote should be given to every intelligent and independent man. And what is our test of intelligence and independence? It is the same test which hon. Gentlemen opposite have adopted in the towns, and which we wish now to extend to the whole country—the test of resident occupancy of a house; and I must say I think that a Bill, the main provision of which is founded on that solid basis, may truly be said to rest upon a principle. The right hon. Gentleman said that the House and the country were indifferent to this measure. Sir, the House is able to speak for itself; but I must say that when the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was speaking the other day I did not notice that indifference which some hon. Gentlemen opposite appear to have discerned. I do not think that the House was indifferent; on the contrary, I think it listened with very close and even rapt attention to the details of the measure. All hon. Members were then anxious to know what alterations were proposed, and what were the benefits to be conferred on the country by this Bill, for which they were asked to labour and to watch, and to be asked to make a great sacrifice of time and patience; and this sacrifice I have no doubt will not be called for in vain. When the right hon. Gentleman says that the country is indifferent, I freely accept the omen. That is exactly what used to be said in 1866, and it was upon that the Predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman relied. Relying upon this supposed indifference, they delayed and threw out the Bill of 1866; and I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he remembers what was the consequence? It was the old story of the Sibylline Books—the Predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman had to buy very dear next year a settlement, which they might have bought very cheap in the year before; and I believe you will find that the indifference of 1884 is quite as effective a quality as was the indifference which brought about such wonders in 1867. An hon. Gentleman says—"Try the country." We shall try it by pushing this Bill as far as we can. But, Sir, the great multitude of people whom we are desirous to admit are certainly not indifferent to the boon which we propose to confer upon them. As long ago as the year 1877 there was a great meeting in London—a meeting of 2,500 delegates, men who had been sent up at the expense of their rural neighbours, who wished to be represented by them—a meeting which the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) described as the most important meeting he had ever been present at; and I say that the interest of those persons in this question has been increased and strengthened since that day. These people take quite as much interest as any other class in public affairs, and they show it in the way they have voted on all occasions when they had the opportunity of voting in respect of School Boards, Boards of Guardians, and such matters. They know their own special affairs, and they can give us very good advice about them. There are many things which touch their interests and feelings, upon nearly all of which they are very well qualified to influence for good our deliberations. You may tax them with indifference; but I am quite certain that, however much you may taunt them, they will never do anything that will deserve that reproach; and it is because we know them to be peaceful and loyal citizens that we are determined to stand by them in good fortune and in bad. Sir, there is one process in this country which insures ultimate success, and that is when one of the two great Parties in the State identifies itself with a great and just undertaking. There never was an undertaking more just and more important than the admission of the county householders to the franchise; and it is for this reason, and for this only, that the Government has bound up its fortune, its faith, and it cause with theirs.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, I am anxious, with the permission of the House, to make a few remarks upon a subject of great importance—namely, the mode in which the great extension of the suffrage conferred by the present Bill will be carried out, and the method under which the votes will be recorded. The present system of mere majority voting is even, under existing circumstances, uncertain and defective in its operation. I believe its supporters are generally under the impression that, though rudely, still surely, it secures to a majority of the electors a majority of the Representatives. This is, however, by no means the case; and I shall hope conclusively to show that while it by no means obtains for minorities that representation in the Legislature to which their numbers justly entitle them, it altogether fails to secure to majorities that preponderance which is their due. Even, therefore, under existing circumstances, the present system is very imperfect; but these drawbacks will be intensified under the present Bill, which, if mere majority voting be generally adopted, will also tend to extinguish that variety in the representation which has hitherto been considered essential to the constitution of the House of Commons. I cannot, indeed, on that account hesitate to support this Bill, which, in my humble judgment, is just and right in itself, and calculated to strengthen and improve the Government of the country; my faith in Her Majesty's Government in this House, and in the justice of the principle we advocate, satisfying me that when the time arrives we shall secure some system of proportional representation. The introduction of the Bill, however, does justify—nay, necessitate—the careful consideration of the subject. It is, of course, clear that additional Members will be given to our large cities—Liverpool, for instance, would be entitled to, say, eight Members. Now, I understood the Prime Minister to condemn electoral districts. But if Liverpool is to remain an undivided constituency, returning eight Members, it is of great importance that we should know how the votes are to be given. If every elector is to have a number of votes equal to the number of Members, with no form of proportional representation, then it is obvious that the slightest majority on either side would return the whole eight Members. We know that in Liverpool the two great Parties are very evenly balanced, and the result would be that a majority of a few hundreds, perhaps of only a few units, would return the whole eight Members, counting 16 votes on a Division in this House. And, Sir, the Journal published by the Electoral Reform Association of Belgium gives a striking illustration of such a case. In the 1882 Elections, the Liberals carried their election in the City of Ghent by a majority of 40 only. Now, Ghent returns eight Members to the Chamber out of 138. If, therefore, 21 electors had gone over to the other side, Ghent would have returned eight Roman Catholics, counting 16 on a Division; and there would have been a Roman Catholic instead of a Liberal majority in the Chamber, which would have led to a complete change of Government. Even under the franchise as it stands, the system is very unsatisfactory and imperfect. In my own county of Kent we polled, in the three Divisions, 13,000 votes against 16,000 given to our opponents, and yet they have all the six seats. Taking the county as a whole, we polled 32,000 votes against 36,000, yet they have carried 16 Members and we two. If we draw a line down England from Lincolnshire to Devonshire, there are on the South side 99 county seats. In many of these the Conservatives had no contest; but the majority of the seats were fought, and the Liberals polled 96,000 votes against 116,000 given to the Tories. On this basis, therefore, we ought to have had, say, 40 seats, and hon. Gentlemen opposite 59. As a matter of fact, however, we only secured 15 against 84. Moreover, of our 15, five were minority seats; so that, but for the introduction of the principle of minority representation, limited though it was, we should have only had 10 seats out of 99 in the whole district, while we were fairly entitled to 40. The Roman Catholics are a very large and respectable portion of the nation; yet in the whole of England and Scotland they have never, I believe, for years past secured more than a single seat at any one time. The case of Ireland is the most serious of all. Certainly one-third of its population is moderate, loyal, and desirous of maintaining the integrity of the Empire; but we are told, on high authority, that under this Bill, unless some system of proportional representation be adopted, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) will secure 95 seats out of 100, leaving only five to the Liberals and Conservatives together; whereas it is clear that under any just system of representation they ought to have over 30; and the result of such a system would be that Ireland would be entirely misrepresented, and that we shall gratuitously create terrible difficulties for ourselves. Sir, it is often said that inequalities in one district are neutralized by compensating inequalities in another. We are told that the Liberals of Kent and Surrey are represented by the Liberal Members for Scotch and Welsh counties; but this is just the old and exploded argument which used to maintain that the people of Birmingham and Manchester were really represented by the Liberal Members of some other boroughs. We are glad, no doubt, that Scotland and Wales send us such admirable Colleagues; it is a consolation; but it is not the same thing. Perhaps the one question about which our farmers in Kent care most is the subject of extraordinary tithes. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will sympathize with us, because he has so powerfully advocated the cultivation of vegetables and the growth of fruit; he has raised the question of jam to a dignity which it never before attained. But while the extraordinary tithe question remains in its present position, I fear it will still be with us a case of jam every other day—jam yesterday, and jam to-morrow, but not jam to-day. But, Sir, the farmers of West Kent cannot expect the Liberal Members from Scotland to help them as regards extraordinary tithes. It is conceivable that they do not even know what extraordinary tithes are. It would not, then, be satisfactory, even if it were true, that inequalities in one district are made up for them by another. But it is not true. Let us look, for instance, at the Elections of 1874 and 1880. In the former the Conservatives had a majority of 60 over the Liberals and Home Rulers put together; while in 1880 the Liberals had a majority over the Conservatives and Home Rulers of more than 50. Of course, if this change were due to a corresponding alteration in public opinion, then, however much each side of the House might regret its defect in the one case and rejoice over its victory in the other, there would be nothing to be said as regards the system. But what are the facts? In 1874, against 1,436,000 votes given to the Liberals and Home Rulers the Conservatives polled 1,222,000 votes; so that, although they were in a majority of 50 in this House, they actually polled 200,000 votes in the country less than their opponents. Perhaps I shall be told that this was due to the small boroughs. But the experience of 1880 proves that this was not so, or only to a certain extent. In 1880 the Liberals and Home Rulers together polled 1,880,000 votes, against 1,418,000 given to the Conservative candidates. The proportions ought, then, to have been 370 Liberal and Home Rule, to 280 Conservative Members; whereas they really were 414 to 236. In 1874, therefore, the Liberals and Home Rulers had 56 Members too few in relation to their total poll; while, on the contrary, in 1880 they secured 43 too many. The difference between the two Elections was, therefore, enormous—namely, 99 out of a total of 650. The present system, then, renders the result of a General Election uncertain, and, to a large extent, a matter of chance; it leads to violent fluctuations in the balance of political power, and, consequently, in the policy of the country. The present system, then, may be good, or may be bad, but it is not representation; and the question is, whether we wish for representation in fact, or in name only. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, I believe, once characterized proportional representation as a pernicious restriction on free voting, while, in fact, the very reverse is the case. What do we see now when there is a contest in any of our great Northern cities? The Irish electors, instructed by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, withhold their votes. They do not consider the prosperity of the Empire, but what they regard as the advantage of Ireland. I do not blame them. It does not seem to me wise; yet I can sympathize with their devotion, mistaken though I think it is, to their own Island. Then, some deputy in the confidence of the Home Rule Party has more or less clandestine and secret interviews with the candidates or their leading supporters. We have the most opposite accounts of what has occurred. Each side accuses the other of truckling to the Home Rule Party, and selfishly imperilling the integrity of the Empire. It must be very unsatisfactory to all concerned; and it would be far better if Liverpool has eight votes and the Home Rulers there are sufficiently strong to return a Home Rule Member, rather than that they should extract doubtful pledges from reluctant candidates. Moreover, the geographical differentiation of political views tends to become more and more accentuated, and might, I think, constitute a real danger. It is but a small consolation to the unrepresented Liberals of Kent to be told that the Conservatives of Scotland share the same grievance, and are as badly off as they are. At present Scotland is overpoweringly Liberal; while the South-Eastern counties of England, with scarcely an exception, are represented by hon. Members sitting on the opposite side of the House. But, further than this, it will be a great misfortune to the country if one part becomes, and continues, overwhelmingly Liberal, and another Conservative—if their distinctive differences become questions of geography and locality rather than of opinion. The different portions of our Empire are not yet so closely fused that we can afford to despise this danger. In my own county we look on the shires as distinctly lower and less civilized than we are. America might have been spared a terrible civil war if the principle of proportional representation had been recognized in the composition of the House of Representatives. This was forcibly pointed out in the Report of the Committee of the United States Senate in favour of proportional representation, which would, they said, have introduced into Congress a large number of Northern Democrats and Southern Republicans, occupying a middle ground, and holding the balance of power—men out of favour at home, but strong enough, both in numbers and position, to check the violence that led at last to civil war. But the aggressive Pro-Slavery Party having finally, under the majority rule, outvoted and silenced all opposition in the South, and their Northern allies, who might have held them in check, being also outvoted and silenced, no middlemen were left, and civil war arose. But, then, it is often said that the minority system, as adopted, say in Liverpool, reduces that great city to the level of a town returning a single Member. Well, that is only because Parties are evenly balanced there. If one-third of the voters are Conservatives, why should they not have one-third of the Members? Why should two-thirds of the constituency monopolize the whole of the Representatives? Birmingham and Glasgow, where the Liberals are strong enough to do so, return, we know, three Liberal Members. You will give Liverpool, say, eight Members, because it has 63,000 electors, of whom, perhaps, 30,000 are Liberals, 30,000 Conservatives, and 3,000 without distinctive political opinions; and I do not understand how anyone can really wish that these 3,000 should practically return all the Members. We know that, generally, they join the Conservatives, and the result would be that 30,000 Liberals would be unrepresented. But, if it were not for the 30.000 Liberals, Liverpool would have had only four Members. It comes, therefore, to this—that because there are 30,000 Liberals in Liverpool, you give the Conservatives twice as many Members as they would otherwise have had. If we are told that any proportional system is objectionable because it might reduce Liverpool to a single vote, then, I ask, how far are you going to carry this principle? In Lancashire, at the last General Election, the Conservatives polled 38,000 votes, the Liberals 36,000, and the Members are four to four. Well, this seems as it should be. The votes were nearly equal, and the Members are equal. But shall we be told that Lancashire is unrepresented? Would anyone propose that the 36,000 Conservative electors should have returned the whole eight Members, and the 34,000 Liberals none at all? Yet this is what we are told is the just system in great cities, such as Liverpool and Glasgow. I do not deny that the three-cornered constituencies are somewhat awkward and cumbersome. The system there adopted is, I think, not the most convenient application of the principle. But it must be admitted that they have given a fair and just result, though, perhaps, in an awkward way. But shall we abandon the principle of just representation because it gives us a little inconvenience? Is it not worth a little trouble? For my part, I cannot abandon the substance of justice to the shadow of simplicity; to do so would be to sacrifice the end to the means. Those who take the opposite view do not seem to realize the difference between an Executive Government and a Representative Assembly. A Government, of course, must be, as far as possible, homogeneous, and of one mind; but a Representative Assembly should be a mirror of the nation. The exclusion of the minority, which is a necessity in the one case, would be intolerable tyranny and injustice in the other. There are, I know, some who, while admitting the justice of our principle, think there is no simple method by which it can be brought into practical operation. But this is not so; on the contrary, there are several. I will only refer to one—namely, the single transferable vote. So far from not being simple, it is even simpler than the mere majority plan of voting would be in large constituencies. I regret that this question has been so often argued as if the just, or even the main reason for it was to admit Representatives of small minorities. Indeed, it is often said that any such system would merely admit Members who are in favour of crotchets. It is, no doubt, difficult to say what is really a crotchet. When Mr. Grote brought in the Ballot, was that a crotchet? When Mr. Villiers brought forward Free Trade, was that a crotchet? Many and many other opinions now generally entertained were regarded as crotchets when they first made their appearance. Everything must have a beginning, and almost everything, even proportional representation itself, has been at first regarded as a crotchet. But, in my humble judgment, the representation of small sections is a very small part of the question. Whether small minorities are representing the temporary delusion of the moment, or a great, although as yet unrecognized truth, this House is, I think, scarcely the proper sphere for their exertions. What I am much more anxious about is that the great Parties in the State should be adequately represented in the different districts of the Empire. We are told by those who have not studied the question that we wish to give to minorities the power which rightly belongs to majorities. The very reverse is the case. An untrammeled system of proportional representation is, as Mr. Mill has truly said—

> "Not only the most complete application of the Democratic principle that has yet been made, but its greatest safeguard."

I trust, Sir, that we may secure that the new voter, as well as those already on the Register, shall have the right, not merely of recording a vote, but of doing so in such a manner as may give it all just and reasonable effect. If this be done, the Parliament of 1880 will have given effect to a great principle; and we shall have, for the first time, a real Representative Assembly. I venture to recommend the system of proportional representation to the House and to the country, because it would give its just political weight to the vote of every elector. It would insure the return of leading and trusted statesmen, as well as of those who are most favourably known in their own districts. It would elevate and purify the whole tone of electoral contests; would obtain for the minority a fair hearing; and last, not least, it is the only mode of securing for the majority that preponderance to which, of course, they are justly entitled.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: At this hour of the night I will not detain the House by going into figures; indeed, the observations I wish to make will be very few; but I desire to call attention to the very peculiar character of the debate that has now been going on for two nights, and to point out how very much more of it has turned upon what is not in the Bill than what is in it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan), in his very sanguine speech, just now referred to some observations of the Prime Minister with regard to the number of voters that would be added to the Irish constituencies by this Bill; and, in explaining what appeared to have been not a perfectly accurate statement of the Prime Minister's, he said that it was "a somewhat rhetorical sentence." It appeared to me that not only was that a rhetorical sentence, but that the whole speech of the Prime Minister was constructed with very considerable rhetorical skill. Of course, it was a powerful rhetorical speech—that we were sure of; but there was a great deal of rhetorical skill in the way in which the right hon. Gentleman kept us more or less in "half light" as to what were really important considerations, and some of the most important factors of this great question, and the example he has set has been followed throughout. Everyone feels by instinct, everybody knows, that no question of this kind can be settled by a measure dealing merely with the extension of the franchise, and not touching the question of the allocation of seats, especially when it is so very large and important an addition that is made. I take the right hon. Gentleman's own simile of the deck load, and say it is quite true the ship can carry a much larger number of passengers than it has on board now; but if you throw the passengers in suddenly, without any arrangements as to how they are to dispose themselves, you run the risk of bringing about a great misfortune. You say you are going to increase the number of your electors in the United Kingdom from something like 3,000,000 to something like 5,000,000. With such an extraordinary addition as that, great changes must be brought about in your electoral system; and it is but natural, and, I think, necessary, that we should take into consideration the circumstances and concomitants of that change. What may be safe and right and good in one respect—under one expansion—may be very unsafe and very unwise in another. Now, Sir, I called the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary a sanguine speech, and I used that expression because of one sentence, in which he told us that if we would pass this Bill he thought nobody in this House, nor anybody living, would be troubled with the franchise question again. Well, I must say that that was a very enticing and alluring prospect; but, at the same time, it was one that seemed to me to show that the right hon. Gentleman had in no degree mastered the conditions of the question, or the views of those amongst whom he sits. I have no doubt that if the matter were to be left entirely to the discretion and the management of the Prime Minister he would desire to keep things quiet, and not go beyond the point to which he carries us in this Bill; but we have had a warning and fair notice from the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), at all events, that he, for his part, looks on any measure of this kind as the merest instalment. There was a sentence of his —not a spoken, but a written sentence —which struck me very much. The words were addressed to the Liberal Association of Battersea, I think, in September last; and what did the right hon Gentleman say? He wrote—

> "I have always assumed that the first step in the direction of Reform would be the assimilation of the borough and county franchise. Public opinion must ripen considerably before it would be possible for any Government to go further; and the final settlement of the franchise question must, of necessity, be postponed until there is sufficient evidence of general agreement on the subject."

Now, what can be a fairer warning than that, coupled with a good many other speeches and statements by the right hon. Gentleman, to the effect that he, for his part, looks to manhood suffrage and to electoral districts? He is not afraid of expressing his opinion; he does not attempt to conceal it. We ought, he thinks, to go much further in the direction of the extension of the franchise, and the extension of electoral districts, than anything which is contemplated in this measure. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister comes forward with a measure dealing only with that which his Colleague recommends as merely the first step; and he does not confine himself to arguing and discussing that, leaving all the other questions alone and on one side; but he does touch on other questions, for the purpose, in the first place, of putting them aside, and saying they cannot be dealt with at the present time; and, secondly, for the further purpose of giving a slight sketch, in the form of personal suggestions or personal opinions, of the view he himself would be disposed to take on some of the important and leading questions. But we cannot legislate on such a statement as that. When we are told that it is one the right hon. Gentleman makes on his own individual authority and opinion, and when we see that his individual opinions are very much at variance with the opinions that we know have been expressed by some of his Colleagues, what possible confidence can we place in it? What are some of the opinions the right hon. Gentleman enunciates? He told us, in the first place, that when we came to redistribution it must be on a very large scale. Well, if it is to be on a very large scale, it is of very great importance that we should see the whole of the measure that is proposed, because this measure that is ultimately to be the governing principle of our Constitution is to be governed by the two factors—a large addition to the franchise, and a large redistribution of seats. We are told what we are to do in one case, and we are not told what we are to do in the other, except that the change is to be a very large one. That, I think, is a consideration which the House will not fail to take notice of. The right hon. Gentleman told us, amongst other of his experiences, that, according to his recollection of Reform Bills, it was always on the Redistribution Clauses that the difficulties and contests arose. Well, that is perfectly true; but what is the inference? It is that it is upon the redistribution of seats that power, and the characteristics of our legislation, are to be founded. Yet the right hon. Gentleman is shirking the difficult and serious part, and endeavouring to deal with the easy and simple part, in the measure he is asking us to pass. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, referred to a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), which I remember very distinctly myself, delivered many years ago, in which he said—

> "I will undertake, if you give me the distribution of seats, to produce whatever results are required."

And that, no doubt, is the case. If you give the franchise to one class or the other, the whole working of the system must necessarily turn upon the distribution of seats. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to tell us some of his views with regard to the principle of redistribution. He told us he was against electoral districts—his Colleague the President of the Board of Trade is in favour of electoral districts when he can get them. How are we to know what we are likely to have? We have the high authority of the Prime Minister against electoral districts; but we have the very suggestive words of the President of the Board of Trade, who says—"We can afford to wait in this matter." He is not in a hurry; the principles of the Radicals are such as lead them to be always ready, and to wait until the time comes for the fulfilment of all that they expect; and I think we may have confidence in the right hon. Gentleman that he will not let the matter sleep much longer than he can help. The Prime Minister says the distinction between county and borough is to be maintained; but he goes a great way towards destroying that distinction in the measure he is introducing, and he does not insure us against its entire destruction by redistribution, which may effect it with the greatest ease—anyone can see that. If he speaks in support of the Constitution under which we have lived and thriven, and if it is right that we should maintain a distinction between borough and county, in Heaven's name, why does he not come forward now, when he has the power, and endeavour to stamp our legislation on this important matter with the character he thinks it ought to bear? The right hon. Gentleman is not doing justice to the House in not giving us the advantage of his great experience on this question. He might leave the franchise to be settled afterwards if he cannot take the two things together. I do not say that he should. The two are so far together that we should know in definite terms the proposals of the Government as much on one branch of the question as on the other. If the two cannot be taken together, it is obvious, as the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) pointed out, speaking with the authority of an old Boundary Commissioner, that more can be done by a redistribution of seats to meet your difficulty than can be done by an extension of the franchise. The same principle applies to some of the other points stated by the Prime Minister. He says he would respect the individuality of towns. Well, I do not know how far that will meet the views of some of the right hon. Gentleman's Colleagues in the Cabinet. The right hon. Gentleman says, also, that scattered populations are to have more Members than concentrated populations. Now, Sir, that is one of those principles which the right hon. Gentleman is so fond of striking out. But when he wants to come to a conclusion he is always ready to strike out the principle which would support the conclusion. Whether that is or is not a sound principle is a matter to be very seriously considered. It is quite uncertain how far it may carry you; but if the right hon. Gentleman means that the distribution of our seats amongst our centres of political power ought to be made with some reference to the different characteristics, the different circumstances, the different histories and connections of the various constituencies, I entirely agree with him. I think that is a principle which we ought to maintain as against the levelling principle of equal electoral districts. Sir, I regret very much that we are not allowed an opportunity of discussing these things—that is to say, we have discussed them; but we have done so under the greatest possible disadvantage. We are discussing a shadow, or the shade of a shadow. If the right hon. Gentleman had told us these things as being the opinions of his Colleagues, though they are not in the Bill, we should then have said we were discussing a shadow; but when he tells us they are his own personal opinions, it is only the shade of a shadow we are discussing. It is not my intention to trouble the House further now. The hour is late, and we shall have full opportunities for the discussion of this measure upon its future stages. I only hope that all that has been said in the course of these two nights' discussion will be appreciated and understood by the country, and that the people will see it is not for nothing that this discussion has taken place; that it is not for nothing that discussion has taken place upon points which have not been included in the Bill. A great deal has been said—and very naturally said—with regard to the Irish part of the case. I think there is one point which has been somewhat overlooked; it is not merely a question how many seats Ireland might be entitled to in the whole, but it is a question of the arrangement and distribution of those seats within Ireland herself. I have no doubt that the objections raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and others who have spoken on the subject, to any increase of the Irish electorate, would be considerably mitigated and modified, if we knew that we were to have a good redistribution of seats within Ireland itself—a redistribution upon such a principle as would secure the loyal minority in that country from being altogether silenced and overwhelmed. That is a matter which could be arranged, and ought to be arranged; but, owing to the way this question has been brought before us, we have no opportunity of dealing with it. It is that which has caused so much difficulty in the discussion we have had. I hope we shall have ample time for the consideration of this measure—ample time for the discussion which must necessarily take place in a more serious and formal manner upon the second reading and future stages of the Bill. My right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) has raised the question of fairness to Scotland in the matter of her representation; and the Prime Minister has, no doubt, intimated that that will be provided for. That, again, is one of those things which remain in the dark. At all events, I think my right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay) has done good service by raising the question; but I hope he will not think it necessary to come to a Division on the subject, because that might give cause to some misunderstanding. It is one of the points which will have to be carefully considered as the discussion on the second reading proceeds. I hope the Government will give us sufficient time, and tell us when they will bring forward the second reading of the Bill.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I will not detain the House for more than a few minutes; indeed, I would not have risen at all to-night, were it not for one or two remarks which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Goschen) made in his exceedingly able speech. I think that the Government have done right in separating the redistribution question from the franchise question. The Prime Minister thought it his duty—and I am not surprised he should do so—to sketch out some ideas with regard to redistribution; but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not feel I am wanting in any respect for him, when I say I think that as the two questions are kept separate, the Party, or any Member of the Party, must not be supposed to be in any way bound by the views which he urged in regard to redistribution. As to the apportionment of seats between the Three Kingdoms, it may turn out that the proportion which Ireland ought to have, according to its number of electors, would be larger than I suppose. But what I wish to guard myself against is that, supposing there be a difference, it must be allowed to us to protest against it being supplied from England. Again, several of us cannot accept the principle that a concentrated population like London, which seems to me, from its very concentration, to have less power of expressing public opinion, should lose its proper proportion of Members. There is only one other remark—a personal remark—which I wish to make. Wishing to avoid introducing the redistribution question into the franchise debate, I wrote a letter in order to avoid making a speech; but my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has remarked upon the figures which I quoted in this letter. The figures, however, were the Prime Minister's, and not mine. I am not at all clear that the Register of electors would be the best basis to go upon. It would, for instance, give Scotland less Members than, I think, it ought to have. But there is one mode by which we can estimate the relation between the Three Kingdoms—namely, by taking into account the number of families. It seems to me that what we aim at in household franchise is family franchise. I will not trouble the House further than to say that if they look at the last Census they will find that, by a calculation based upon the number of families, England would gain five additional Members, Scotland would gain 11, and Ireland would lose 16. My hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) made a very able speech in favour of proportional representation. Now, that is a most important matter; but it certainly belongs to the redistribution rather than to the franchise question. Speaking very briefly myself, I may say that as the Prime Minister did acquaint us with some of his views, I wish he had told us whether he intends to give any large number of Members to the large towns, which I do not think can be avoided; and whether he would then be prepared to do so on the proportional principle, or on the system of *scrutin de liste*, which was proposed in France for adoption, and which is now the Belgian principle of simple majorities; or by dividing the country into districts. I can only, speaking for myself, say that if the number of Members for any particular town be more than two there will be the strongest possible argument in favour of proportional representation, or some representation of the minority. I rose particularly to say, however, that, anxious as I am to obtain this additional franchise—indeed, of all political measures it is the one I have all through my life most cared for—I hope it will be kept separate from the redistribution question. The extension of the franchise is a matter which ought to be dealt with by itself; and we must not be supposed to be committed to any statements, or to any plans, with regard to the measures which must follow the Franchise Bill.

Mr. WARTON: I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Nothing can be more fair than the tone of the remarks of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster). I presume that the main object with which he rose was to reserve, if necessary—and it would be most reasonable that he should if there were grounds for it—his opinion with regard to any point I mentioned in my speech in introducing the Bill, as being more fit to be taken into consideration when we are dealing with our future scheme of redistribution.

Mr. WARTON: I rise to Order. I move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am perfectly aware——

Mr. WARTON: I rise to Order. Before the Prime Minister rose I moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER having intimated that the right hon. Gentleman was quite in Order,

Mr. GLADSTONE continued: I am perfectly aware that in entering on the subject of redistribution at all I am venturing upon very dangerous ground—*incedo per ignes suppositos cineri doloso*—and I may say now that what I stated upon that subject was intended exclusively for those who were already disposed to place some confidence in the Government, and who were earnestly friendly to the Bill. I never expected to mitigate the wrath of hon. Gentlemen opposite by entering into the particulars of redistribution, and I am afraid I have failed in mitigating the views of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). I should have wished very much to have entered upon the grave and serious part of the speech of my right hon. Friend — that part in which he appeared to suppose that I had taken a very extraordinary course in doing for Ireland that which I did for Scotland — namely, in giving my general opinion as to the position in which it would stand under a Redistribution Bill. However, I will reserve that subject for a more fitting opportunity in the course of these debates. I can only say now that it was understood on the first night of the debate that the debate would be brought to a close to-night, and the state of the House evidently shows that that is the general desire. Joining, as I do, in that desire, I will not trouble the House by giving a detailed reply to my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). I think that when the proper time comes I shall be able to satisfy my right hon. Friend in some degree, I will not say as to the accuracy of my opinion, but as to the propriety of giving an indication of my opinion in respect to the relative position of the Three Kingdoms under a scheme of redistribution I may have to propose.

Sir JOHN HAY said, that, in consequence of the appeal made to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), he would not put the House to the trouble of a Division. But perhaps he might be allowed to say a word or two in explanation. He should be very greatly astonished if Scotland was satisfied with the proposal made that an addition to its Members was to be found by an increase of the Members of the House of Commons.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, the Opposition was committed, by the Reform Bill brought in in 1867, to the Democratic principle; and he regarded the present Bill as a mere complement of the measure carried in 1867. The consequence was that all the arrangements to be made for carrying out this measure must be based upon different principles from those which had hitherto prevailed in this country. He was not surprised at the anxiety expressed as to the redistribution of seats, because it appeared to him that in redistribution only could they look for any legislative security for the rights of real property. There was nothing in this Bill which afforded the slightest security for property, except it be the service franchise; and the service franchise was based upon a principle which had hitherto been considered by Parliament as corrupt.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, and The Lord Advocate.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 119.]

LAW OF EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.—[Bill 4.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Mr. WARTON said, he was surprised and astonished at the proposal to read now a second time a Bill which meant nothing more nor less than a revolution in their Criminal Law system. This proposal only showed that the Government were determined to pass all they could. It was astonishing that this course should be taken at an hour when everyone was wearied by a long debate. Probably not one Member in 20 would care what alteration might be proposed in this matter. In a recent case in the Provinces, one of the Judges had called the attention of the jury and the counsel to the fact that there was a very important witness who had not been called on either side, and that was the prisoner's wife; and it was to carry out the idea then suggested that the Attorney General had brought forward this Bill, to enable husbands and wives to be called as witnesses against each other. The policy of their law had always been to consider the relations of husband and wife so sacred, and their friendship and love and union so complete, that it would be impossible to call them to give evidence against each other. To this there was one exception, and that was in a case in which a husband assaulted his wife, or a wife assaulted her husband. That was a different matter, and in ordinary cases they were never called against each other. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned," —(*Mr. Warton.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that, while the hon. and learned Member was surprised at his moving the second reading of this Bill, he was surprised that the hon. and learned Member had not blocked the Bill. He had not the slightest idea why that was, unless it was that the hon. and learned Member approved of the contents of the Bill. As to the Bill being revolutionary, he might mention that the House of Lords had passed a similar Bill; and it was only because he wished to be as revolutionary as the House of Lords that he desired to read the Bill a second time. A similar Bill was passed by the late Parliament by a majority of nearly 5 to 2; and if there had been any substantial objection to this Bill, he was sure his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), or other hon. Members, would have blocked it, in order to insure a discussion upon it. They had all been silent; and he trusted that the House would agree to the Motion, especially considering that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport had not blocked the Bill—a process to which he never failed to resort when he was in earnest.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he thought the fact that the House of Lords had passed a similar Bill to this was scarcely a reason why this Bill should now be read a second time, without the Attorney General having condescended to give any explanation of its provisions, or the grounds for introducing it. It was a Bill which certainly dealt with an important point in Criminal Law, and it ought not to be smuggled through the House between 1 and 2 in the morning. It was a Bill which dealt with the competency as a witness of the husband or wife of a prisoner, and this was of all days a most unfortunate day for bringing forward such a Bill without explanation or defence, because there was in to-day's papers a report of a case in which the Court of Criminal Appeal had decided against the competency of a husband or wife of a prisoner as a witness, one against the other.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE asked whether the hon. Member was in Order in considering this case?

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that this debate be now adjourned, and the hon. Member must confine his remarks to that Question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it seemed to him to be necessary, in order to arrive at a decision on that question, to consider what it was that was to be adjourned. This Bill dealt with a point of considerable interest; and, although he could have understood the Bill being read a second time yesterday, he could not assent to it now, after the experience of to-day; and he should certainly vote for the adjournment of the debate, and against the second reading, until he heard from the Government that instead of bringing in a fragmentary Bill of this kind they would introduce a measure which would deal with the whole Law of Evidence, so that it would not be necessary for the House to take up the subject over and over again in a tinkering fashion. The arguments that might be adduced in favour of adjournment were numerous; and he trusted the Government would not attempt to force upon a minority the second reading of a Bill of such consequence that the Government themselves thought it necessary to take the course they had.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 20; Noes 99: Majority 79.—(Div. List, No. 26.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS (PERPETUAL ANNUITIES), INDIAN LOAN ACT, 1881 (TERMINABLE ANNUITY) BILL.

RESOLUTIONS REPORTED. BILL ORDERED.

Order for Report of Resolutions [February 29] read.

MR. ONSLOW wished to know what connection there was between the Indian Loan Act of 1881 and the Post Office Savings Banks?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) explained that the Resolutions about to be reported were purely of a formal character, to enable a Bill to be set up, which could be discussed on its second reading or in Committee.

Resolutions *reported*, and *agreed to*.

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER and Mr. COURTNEY.

MARKET TOLLS (IRELAND).

RESOLUTION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [15th February],

"That there be laid before this House, a Return of the values of the Market Tolls, of the Rates, and of the other sources of local revenue of each of the towns in Ireland with a population of under 50,000:

"Return to state whether such towns enjoy the whole of the Tolls and other sources of revenue, or whether such income is mortgaged, and what is the amount of such mortgage:

"Return to state the date of such mortgage, and the purpose to which the money so raised was applied, particularly as to whether it was applied for local development or for the advantage of individuals:

"Return to state where the Tolls belong to one or more private individuals, and to state where those so belong, whether it is by feudal prescription, by grant from the Crown, or by purchase, and where the Tolls so belong to a private individual to give a summary of the grant or other document under which the Tolls are so leviable by private persons:

"Form of Return as follows:—Name of Town; Amount of Tolls leviable in such Town in 1883; Amount of Rates in 1883; Other Sources of Income in 1883; To whom Tolls belong; and, if not belonging to the Town, by what Title; Date and Application of Money when Mortgaged:

"Summary of grants from Crown, &c. where the Tolls are held by private persons."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the Government had agreed as to the form in which they were willing to give the Returns moved for by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway. They proposed to give the first line of the 4th paragraph, and to omit the remainder of the paragraph, adding to it the words—

"And the dates of and parties to the grant, when such can be obtained from information accessible to the public."

All the last part would be struck out.

Mr. SPEAKER asked if the hon. and gallant Member for Galway was prepared to accept the proposed Amendment?

Colonel NOLAN replied in the affirmative. He was willing to accept all the Amendments of the Solicitor General for Ireland.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Return *ordered,* "of the values of the Market Tolls, of the Rates, and of the other sources of local revenue of each of the towns of Galway, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Portumna, and Gort, in the county of Galway:

"Return to state whether such towns enjoy the whole of the Tolls and other sources of revenue, or whether such income is mortgaged, and what is the amount of such mortgage:

"Return to state the date of such mortgage, and the purpose to which the money so raised was applied, particularly as to whether it was applied for local development or for the advantage of individuals:

"And, Return to state where the Tolls belong to one or more private individuals, and the dates of and parties to the grant, when such can be obtained from information accessible to the public:

"Form of Return:—Name of Town; Amount of Tolls leviable in such Town in 1883; Amount of Rates in 1883; Other Sources of Income in 1883; To whom Tolls belong: and, if not belonging to the Town, by what Title; Date and Application of Money when Mortgaged."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Local Government Districts of Bognor, Ealing, and Henley, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. George Russell and Sir Charles Dilke.

LICENSING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts as affecting Cities and Boroughs in England.

Resolution *reported:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Caine, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Brown, Mr. Cropper, and Mr. Williamson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 126.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 4th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Greek Marriages* (26).

INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord NORTON asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether they were taking any steps preparatory to legislation on the subject of the Report of the Royal Commission on Industrial and Reformatory Schools? In the absence, he feared from illness, of the noble Lord (Lord Aberdare), the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Industrial and Reformatory Schools, he asked what was being done about their Report, which, after two years' labour and visitation throughout the Three Kingdoms, came out last August, and had now been circulated some time. The Government had pressed for this inquiry as a matter of urgency from the enormously-growing charge on account of the schools in question, both on the Treasury and on the rates; and the difficulty of keeping straight and within bounds institutions supported half by the public, and the more important part by private charity. The inquiry was also undertaken owing to the confusion of publicly-aided schools being ordinarily in the school department, while those that were attempting to train the most neglected children out of criminal associations were put separately under the police department; and, lastly, from the multiplying varieties of schools at the public expense, many of them for children whose position and treatment were the same. A subject which the Government had pressed so urgently for all these reasons two years ago should not be shelved and made to give way to more exciting political questions. He, therefore, wished to ask if steps were being taken preparatory to the required legislation?

Earl GRANVILLE, in reply, said, he was happy to be able to inform the noble Lord that this important subject had been under the serious consideration of the Home Office, and that the authorities there had been in communication with the Committee of the Privy Council on Education with regard to it.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 4th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Cambridgeshire, *v.* the Right honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B, now Viscount Hampden, called up to the House of Peers.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Croydon Direct Railway*; Stockton Carrs Railway.*

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings).

Public Bill—*First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders* [127].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (THAMES CROSSINGS) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Mr. RITCHIE said, he intended to move the reference of the Bill to a Hybrid Committee; but he presumed the proper time for making that Motion would be after the Bill had been read a second time?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. RITCHIE said, he begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name, and which was—

> "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection:—That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee be referred to the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum."

His Motion had two distinct objects—one was that the Bill be referred to a Committee commonly understood by the name of a Hybrid Committee, and the other was that there should be a special Instruction to the Committee to hear those who might desire to petition against the Bill, but who otherwise would not have a *locus standi.* With reference to the first of these proposals—that the Bill be referred to a Hybrid Committee—his reason for desiring this was that, looking to the fact that the Bill was more or less of a public nature, it ought to be referred to a Committee of a more public character than an ordinary Private Bill Committee. A Hybrid Committee, as the House knew, consisted in part of Members nominated by the House, and nominated with special regard to the questions they had to consider; whereas an ordinary Private Bill Committee was taken at haphazard, and might not have upon it any Member specially qualified to deal with the particular matters referred to it. This Bill, as he had said, was essentially of a public character. Most of the Bills which had hitherto been introduced, dealing with matters connected with the Metropolis, had been treated in one of two ways—either as a Public Bill, or as a Bill of a semi-public nature. Sir Erskine May, in his well-known work, said—

> "Though a Bill relating to a city is generally held to be a Private Bill, Bills concerning the Metropolis have been dealt with as Public Bills—a large area, the number of parishes, the vast population, and the variety of interests concerned, constituting them measures of public policy, rather than of local interest."

The main proposal contained in the present Bill was the construction of a subway across the Thames; the providing of steam ferries across the Thames; and the building of a new Battersea Bridge. All these proposals affected a large population, a number of parishes, and a variety of interests; and they carried out what also involved a considerable amount of taxation in the Metropolis. The subway itself, he understood, would probably cost about £2,000,000; and he contended that all these characteristics in the present Bill constituted the measure one of a public, rather than of a private character. The Bill, however, could not be introduced as a Public Bill, because certain Notices had to be given; and it was, therefore, one which had to be introduced as a Private Bill. Having been dealt with so far as a Private Bill, he now desired the House to convert it into a semi-Public Bill by referring it to a Hybrid Committee. Another reason why he desired the Bill to be referred to a Hybrid Committee was, that he wished the House to give to the Committee a special Instruction, not usually given to Private Bill Committees, whereas in reference to Hybrid Committees it was very usual. He had many precedents for dealing with a matter of this kind in a public way. All questions affecting the crossing of the Thames, with one exception—namely, the High Level Bridge—had been dealt with as public questions, and inquired into by public Committees. There was a public Committee in 1836 upon Metropolitan communications; in 1846, upon toll-paying bridges; in 1855, on Metropolitan communications; and in 1865 and 1876 there were also public Committees upon similar subjects. There were also many precedents for referring Bills, brought in as Private Bills, connected with the Metropolis to Hybrid Committees. He would, however, only trouble the House with one, and that was the case of the Thames River (Prevention of Floods) Bill. That Bill was brought in as a Private Bill; but it was referred to a Hybrid Committee, notwithstanding the opposition of his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), who used the same arguments on that occasion as, no doubt, would be repeated to-day in opposition to the proposal to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee. But among the supporters of the proposal to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee was the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), his right hon. Friend who was then Chairman of Committees (Mr. Raikes), and his right hon. Friend who was at that time Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross). All those high authorities agreed that the Bill, on account of its public nature and the many interests involved in it, ought to be referred to a Hybrid Committee; and, notwithstanding the opposition of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, the House arrived at the same conclusion, and the proposal was carried to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee. He had now a word to say as to the Instruction he desired the House to give to the Committee. The Instruction would have the effect of enabling the Local Boards and Vestries of London to be heard either for or against the Bill. They would have no *locus standi* before a Private Bill Committee on account of a purely technical reason —namely, that they were represented by the Metropolitan Board itself; and, therefore, they were supposed to be parties to the Bill, and could not appear against it, unless leave was given them to appear. The proposal he now made was such a reasonable one—namely, that those most vitally interested in the Bill should be able to have their reasons for and against the Bill heard—that he could hardly conceive it possible that it would be met with any serious objection on the part of his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The reason why he wanted this Instruction rendered it necessary that he should give a history, and a very short history, of the main proposals contained in the Bill. The main proposals were a provision for crossing the Thames by means of a tunnel, and by means of steam ferries. He had nothing to say against the steam ferries; but for years, in the East End of London, the people had cried out against the injustice they had suffered in consequence of the want of permanent communications across the Thames. They contended that, looking to the fact that London West of London Bridge was crowded with bridges, it was a gross injustice that they in the East End of London, with a population exceeding that of Liverpool, Manchester, Salford, and Birmingham put together, had no permanent means of communication with the other side of the River. Two years ago an agitation upon the question was set on foot, and ever since then it had been increasing. Those who had taken part in it had been pressing their claims upon all the local authorities, upon the Metropolitan Board of Works, and upon the City. What had been the result? The Metropolitan Board of Works referred the question to a Committee, and that Committee referred the matter to their engineer, who reported, after fully investigating the merits of the case, that the wants of the East End of London could only be adequately met by making three permanent means of communication—one between the Tower and Bermondsey by means of a high level bridge, another between Shadwell and Rotherhithe, and a third between Blackwall and Greenwich, the two latter to assume the form of a tunnel. That recommendation having been received and adopted by the Metropolitan Board of Works, they applied to the Government to sanction the re-imposition of the Coal and Wine Duties, in order to provide the necessary funds; but, their application not being assented to, they abandoned their proposal to proceed with the three means of communication which, they had said, were essential for the well-being of the East End of London, and, instead, proposed, suddenly and secretly, without notice to anybody, to provide a communication by means of a tunnel, which was not to be constructed in any of the places which their own engineer had reported as desirable sites for such communication. He contended that if the Metropolitan Board of Works were at all fit to do the work they were appointed to carry out, after having declared that these communications were necessary, they should have carried them out without regard to the means by which the money was to be raised. The Metropolitan Board, however, did not choose to do that; but they secretly prepared another scheme, which was not one of those proposed by their own engineer, or at any of the spots he had pointed out as suitable sites. The consequence was that, as soon as the proposal contained in the present Bill was made known, an outcry from the whole of the East End of London was immediately raised. The whole of the Local Boards and Vestries, without a single exception, in the East End of London passed resolutions declaring that the proposed tunnel was altogether inadequate, and that they would rather be without any permanent communication at present than accept the one proposed, preferring to wait until they could obtain that which was suitable for proper communication across the Thames. Curiously enough, the very Local Board in whose particular interest this tunnel was proposed—the Whitechapel Board of Works and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works would hardly deny that it was in their interest that it was proposed —passed a resolution stating that they would have nothing to do with a scheme which could not in any shape or form meet the requirements of the case. Delegates from the various Boards in the East End of London met and passed a resolution condemning the scheme of the Board of Works on the ground that it was altogether unsuited for vehicular traffic, and ought to be abandoned. That was the resolution arrived at at a meeting of the delegates of the whole of the East End Boards, and the reasons they gave for objecting to the scheme were very strong reasons indeed. They were of opinion that the proposed tunnel was in the wrong place. It was contended that if there was only one scheme to be proceeded with, it ought to be the central scheme proposed by the engineer of the Metropolitan Boards of Works, instead of which the proposed tunnel was to be constructed at the Western-most boundary of the East End of London. It was further objected to the proposed tunnel that in consequence of the steep gradients—1 in 25—it was altogether unfit for vehicular traffic. He need hardly point out how utterly inadequate and ridiculous such a proposal as this was. No doubt his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board would say that they proposed to provide mechanical means for overcoming the difficulty of this steep gradient; but he altogether ridiculed the idea of providing communications for heavy traffic with such steep gradients as to necessitate mechanical means for overcoming them. It was, in his opinion, an utter farce. Then, again, if mechanical means were provided, it was well known that such mechanical means would not only be extremely costly, and would require considerable expense in maintenance, but that they would be very liable to get out of order. The result would be that if this tunnel were provided for the East End of London it would not be used. Those who were desirous of crossing the River would prefer to go a very little further up and cross London Bridge upon the level, and thus rid themselves of the inconvenience of probably finding the machinery out of order. What would be the consequence of this? The tunnel would not be used, and this would be advanced as an argument against those who desired further communications. It would be contended that communications were not wanted by the people of the East End of London at all, that the outcry was shallow and artificial, and not justified by the necessities of the case. There was a still stronger reason against this proposal—namely, that the City of London was now contemplating—and he believed that it was under the consideration of a Committee of the Corporation—the erection of a bridge almost in the immediate locality of the proposed tunnel, with a view, mainly, to ease the traffic over London Bridge, as well as to give further facilities to the East End of London. It was proposed by the City to construct a low level bridge with a swing opening in the centre, a plan that was very feasible. If that were done, the work would be paid for out of the City revenues altogether, and the Metropolis would not be called upon to bear any portion of the cost, but would be at liberty to spend their funds in crossings which were felt to be more necessary and essential lower down. The Reference which he desired the House to pass was simply and solely this—that, before an enormous expenditure was incurred in an undertaking which the Vestries and the District Boards in the East End of London had declared to be useless to them — that before the Metropolitan Board obtained power to incur this expenditure, all the District Boards and Vestries of the East End of London should have a fair and impartial hearing of the case they desired to present before the Committee who would have the duty of deciding the subject. That was all that he wanted. No doubt his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board would say that there was one, and perhaps two, Local Boards in the East End of London who would have a *locus standi*, because the proposed works would interfere with their land; but he need hardly point out to the House what a much stronger position those who objected to the Bill would have if the whole of the District Boards of the East End of London were able to unite together with a view of bearing the expenses that would be necessary in order to insure that their case should be adequately and completely laid before Parliament. He would say, further—and this was about the last observation he would trouble the House with—that before placing the Motion on the Paper he had considered it his duty to write to every one of the Local Boards and Vestries in the East End of London, asking whether they approved of the proposal he intended to make to the House of Commons, and from every single one of those Vestries and Local Boards he had received an expression of their highest approval and of their most earnest desire that, by the House consenting to this Instruction to the Committee, they should obtain that which, by a mere technicality, they would otherwise be deprived of—namely, the power of appearing before the Committee and presenting the opinions of those they represented as to the inadequacy of the communication now about to be proposed, before Parliament agreed to sanction the expenditure of such an enormous sum as £2,000,000, and entailed upon the Metropolis so large and serious an amount of taxation. He did not mean to say that such taxation might not be necessary, provided they got what they wanted; but what he did say was, that it would be highly improper to sanction so large an expenditure of money as £2,000,000 sterling, if the case were not to be adequately put before the Committee. He thought that those who considered the expenditure undesirable had good ground of complaint, and ought to have a fair opportunity of submitting their case to the House. He begged to move the Motion which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection:—That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee be referred to the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records; Five to be the quorum."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he did not think it would be proper to enter into any details now, considering the great length at which his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had just spoken; but he must take exception to one argument which had been raised by his hon. Friend, and that was the argument of economy. He (Baron Henry De Worms) was as anxious to save the pockets of the ratepayers as any man; but he thought the proposal to send a scheme of this sort to a Hybrid Committee, instead of having any advantage, would be fraught with immense disadvantage, inasmuch as it would entail a very large expense upon the very body of men whose interests were supposed to be represented by his hon. Friend. He (Baron Henry De Worms) happened to represent a constituency which took considerable interest in the Bill, and he himself had had many interviews with, and had introduced many deputations to, the Metropolitan Board of Works upon the subject; and, speaking for a very large constituency which was supposed to be more interested in the scheme than any other part of London—namely, the Borough of Greenwich, he was certain that he was only stating their interests and desires when he said that they would be perfectly satisfied with the Bill being submitted to an ordinary Select Committee, and that they did not require that it should be submitted to a Mixed Committee, where every kind of opposition might be introduced. The inquiry might become absolutely unlimited if the Bill were referred to a Mixed Committee, for it was a question which might be said to affect, so far as the rates were concerned, every parish in the Metropolis. Why should not the parish of Hampstead, which had nothing whatever to do with the Thames, come down to the Committee and offer an elaborate opposition to the Bill? He thought the question was simply one for those parts of London which were most deeply interested in the communications between the two banks of the River; and although his hon. Friend asserted that a very large portion of the inhabitants were in favour of the Bill being referred to a Hybrid Committee, he (Baron Henry De Worms) ventured to think, from the evidence which had been laid before him, that a much larger proportion would be satisfied by the reference of the Bill to an ordinary Select Committee of the House.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, that he had risen at the same moment as his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms), and he was much obliged to his hon. Friend for interposing between himself and the House, because he thought his hon. Friend had proved most conclusively that the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), who assumed to speak for the whole of the East End of London, was altogether and entirely wrong.

MR. RITCHIE begged his hon. Friend's pardon. He was certain that his hon. Friend would not like to misrepresent him. In speaking of the East End of London, he had meant London East of London Bridge, North of the Thames.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he had certainly not understood his hon. Friend to confine his remarks to the North-East of London; but, on the contrary, he understood him to speak for a great number of people who entirely dissented from his views. He (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) hoped the House would not assent to the Motion. There was no necessity for incurring the enormous cost which would attend a Hybrid Committee, when they might have the work done by an ordinary Select Committee of the House. He admitted that a very large number of the inhabitants of the East End of London were anxious to have communications across the Thames, and the Metropolitan Board of Works had entered into the question over and over again. They proposed, in the first instance, the erection of a high level bridge. His hon. Friend talked of this being a public matter. Of course, everything that interested the public of London was a public matter; but it so happened that the Bill for a high level bridge was referred to a Committee of five Members in the usual manner, and he contended that a Committee of that character, the Members of which would sit day by day and pay attention to the Business brought before them, was a far better tribunal than a Hybrid Committee, where it would be found that some Members would attend upon one day and some upon another, and at the end, when the time arrived for taking the vote, it would be found that many Members would attend to vote who had not heard any portion of the evidence. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) that the proposal to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee would involve an enormous as well as a useless expenditure of the public money; and he said, further, that it was a most unusual course to take. He would ask any hon. Member of that House who represented a large constituency what he would think if special districts were to be allowed to come forward and to oppose a Body like the Metropolitan Board of Works, who represented the entire Metropolis? He might go further, and ask the House to take the large districts of London, such as Paddington, or St. George's. If those districts brought in Bills for the benefit of their own locality, what would be said if the district of Knightsbridge, or some Local Board from over the water, or from the Tower Hamlets, were to have the power of coming in and being heard against the Vestry which represented the district immediately concerned? He took it that if such a course were to be sanctioned, it would involve a scandalous waste of public money; and he hoped the House would, therefore, not adopt the proposition of his hon. Friend, but would allow the Bill to go to a Committee, where, as his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms) said, only the representatives of the districts interested could appear, instead of referring it to a Committee before whom the Vestries of the East, North-East, and South-East, and even the Vestries of Hampstead, Paddington, or anywhere else, who liked to be represented, would be able to come and swell the large expense which would have to be incurred. That would inevitably be the result if the proposal of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) was adopted, which, however, he trusted it would not be. What was the nature of the Petitions which had already been presented against the Bill? If the House would kindly give him their attention for a few minutes, he thought he would be able to show that the proposal of his hon. Friend was not only unnecessary, unusual, and inexpedient, but that his hon. Friend's arguments in support of it were founded upon a misrepresentation of the real state of the facts. His hon. Friend asserted that the interests only of two of the London Boards could properly be brought before the Committee; but his hon. Friend omitted to state that the general shipping interests, and the navigation of the River, were altogether adequately represented by Petitions from the Conservators of the River Thames, the General Steam Navigation Company, and the Steamship Owners' Association. Then, again, the existing ferry rights were represented by the London and Blackwall and Great Eastern Railway Companies, and the Watermen and Lightermen's Company; the quays, wharves, and foreshore rights, by the London and St. Katherine's Dock Company, the owners of quays and warehouses, and traders of the Port of London, the Carron Company, and the Conservators of the Thames; and the general interests of the Port of London, and special local interests, were also represented by the Corporation of the City of London, the Whitechapel District Board of Works, and the Limehouse District Board of Works. It would be seen that among the Petitioners were the Corporation of London, who would, no doubt, appear and say everything that a great Corporation could have to say against the Bill, if there was any real necessity for opposing it; and as regarded the Vestries, his hon. Friend said—"Let the Vestries combine together, and let them in that way divide the expense." Now, what he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) contended was, that there were already two District Boards which had a *locus standi*—namely, the Whitechapel and the Limehouse Boards of Works. Those two Boards could combine together in order to be represented before the Committee, and by that means they would be able to reduce the expense; and surely, if necessary, the intelligent friends of his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Ritchie) could take common action with them, and select some counsel to represent the views of the entire body. By that means they would save the ratepayers a vast amount of money, and would even do more than that in preventing what he could not help considering a great scandal—namely, that Vestries and District Boards should be allowed in any way, after the matter had been thoroughly thrashed out, to come in and not only protract the inquiry, but materially increase the expense. He thought the proper course would be to allow the question to go before the usual Committee, where every interest would be well and amply represented in the simplest way, and at the smallest cost to the ratepayers. He would not travel through all the statements which had been made by his hon. Friend, as he had no wish to take up the time of the House unnecessarily. He would only say that the Metropolitan Board were now proposing a low level bridge. They had brought in a Bill for a high level bridge, and that Bill was sent to the same sort of Committee he was now advocating. That Committee came to a decision which was adverse to the scheme of the Metropolitan Board. The same thing might happen now, but the proposition now made and supported by the Metropolitan Board was that the Bill should be referred to a Committee composed of a body of independent Gentlemen. He believed that a body of independent Members would be far better qualified to form a judgment upon a question of this sort, than a certain number of independent Members combined with a certain number of persons like himself—because it would be necessary to put him upon a Hybrid Committee—in which, in his opinion, everybody would know how every Member was going to vote. It would be much better to have the case laid before an independent Committee, who would be able to give an impartial decision. Under these circumstances, he should do all in his power to oppose the proposal of his hon. Friend, and he hoped the House would not consent to it.

Mr. FIRTH said, for that one main reason he should be extremely glad if the House found itself able to agree to the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie); and that reason was that the Vestries and District Boards might have an opportunity of being heard upon certain questions raised by a Bill which vitally affected their interests. He did not altogether agree with the statement of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board as to the enormous expense which this course would involve. With respect to the East End of London and its communications, he did not propose to say anything in addition to that which had been stated by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie); but the Bill would prejudicially affect one part of the West End—namely, Chelsea; and he desired to point out that the Chelsea Vestry could not be heard, and would have no opportunity of expressing an opinion upon the provisions of the measure unless the proposition of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) was accepted, because the Metropolitan Board did not propose to take any land at Chelsea. The people of Chelsea had a very great desire to be heard before the Committee, and they would be heard if the proposition now before the House were adopted. He thought it was most desirable that the Vestries of London should have an opportunity of expressing their opinions, because, although the Metropolitan Board of Works was supposed to be a Body representative of the Vestries, and in one point of view it undoubtedly was, still, as a matter of fact, there were sometimes wide differences of opinion between the Board and some of the Vestries and the people of London generally. He trusted that the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) would be accepted.

MR. RAIKES said, he thought it was always undesirable to prejudge any question that would have to be considered by a Committee of the House—whether a Select Committee or a Hybrid Committee—to whom it was afterwards to be referred. He understood, however, that there was no intention on the part of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets, although he had glanced at the question in the course of his speech, to attempt to defeat the Bill by the Motion which he had submitted. If he (Mr. Raikes) thought there was any such intention on the part of his hon. Friend he would certainly be very unwilling to follow him in such a course; but the question, as was stated by the last speaker, really arose from the fact that the Metropolitan Board of Works, in consequence of the Rules of *locus standi*, which prevailed in the House, would be able, practically, to exclude the expression of the opinion of the Vestries before an ordinary Committee of the House of Commons. Some years ago, when he (Mr. Raikes) was more frequently concerned in these questions than now, this matter was continually cropping up; and it was held that as the Metropolitan Board of Works was a public Body these Bills were practically Public Bills, seeing that they touched vast public interests. As a matter of fact, they were frequently introduced as Public Bills, but sometimes only as Private Bills of a *quasi*-public character. But whenever a reasonable case was made out for sending them to a Hybrid Committee, the House was generally willing to consent to that course. It would certainly be a very great hardship if the ratepayers in certain parts of London, who were most immediately affected by a scheme of this sort, were precluded by the Rules of the House from putting their case before the Committee. He took that view himself—and he would venture to remind the House that on previous occasions it was a view which had very frequently, and, indeed, generally, been taken by the House. Therefore it would be something of a new departure if the House refused to assent to the Motion which had been made by his hon. Friend.

MR. BRYCE wished to say a word or two as one of the Representatives of the district affected by the Bill. He could assure the House that very great interest was felt in the question of a communication across the River in the East of London North of the Thames. Although he did not think this the time to discuss the merits of the Bill, he could say as much as this—that the Metropolitan Board of Works did not properly represent the local feeling, and that it was exceedingly desirable some opportunity should be given for that local feeling, particularly as represented by the Vestries, to express itself. The question was one that affected a population of 500,000 on each side of the River, and it was not too much to ask the House to appoint an exceedingly strong Committee, with power to elicit a full expression of opinion with regard to the merits of the Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he hoped that his hon. and gallant Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works would not put the House to the trouble of a Division, but would accept the Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). The practice was one which had been adopted on former occasions of referring Bills relating to the Thames to a Hybrid Committee, as in the case of the Floods Prevention Bill.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he remembered the instance referred to by the President of the Local Government Board very well. A Motion was made to refer the Floods Prevention Bill to a Hybrid Committee. He was in Office at the time, and he certainly took no objection to that course.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL HOGG said, that after the frank opinion expressed on both sides of the House, and seeing that everybody was against him, he did not think there would be any use in dividing. He would, therefore, bow to the decision of the House, and accept the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie).

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE said, the question of a Hybrid Committee in connection with the Thames Floods Prevention Bill had been referred to. He was one of the Members who sat upon that Committee, and he felt bound to state that a greater waste of money and time than that Committee was required to make had very seldom been experienced. In his opinion the whole of the money and time devoted to that inquiry was thrown away. He thought the proposal of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works was extremely reasonable, and that the opposition to it was extremely unreasonable. He was, therefore, sorry to find that his hon. Friend the Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) had consented to accept the Resolution.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. FIRTH said, he had on the Paper an Instruction to the Committee to provide a temporary bridge for the accommodation of foot passengers during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge. The Bill proposed to repeal a section contained in the Act of 1881, in regard to the rebuilding of Battersea Bridge; and in that section provision was made for the accommodation of foot passengers during the reconstruction of the bridge. The persons in whose interests he spoke did not oppose the main provisions of the Bill. All they wanted was that a temporary bridge should be provided for the accommodation of foot passengers, while the necessary operations for the reconstruction of the bridge were going on. He hoped that his hon. and gallant Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works would be prepared to make some concession in the matter, as it was absolutely necessary that some provision should be made. Ten thousand people passed over the present bridge every day, and if no provision were made for their accommodation, except by crossing the River in a boat, the result would be that 10,000 people would have to go half-a-mile out of their way every day. He believed that no bridge across the Thames had ever been rebuilt without some provision of this kind; and unless his hon. and gallant Friend made a concession he hoped the House would pass a mandatory Instruction of this kind.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they do provide a temporary bridge for the accommodation of foot-passengers during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, his hon. Friend would recollect that soon after the bridges over the Thames were set free the Metropolitan Board of Works found it absolutely necessary to rebuild two of them. One was now in the process of reconstruction, and Battersea would have been begun ere now, if it had not been for the fact that after the Metropolitan Board of Works succeeded in passing their Bill through Parliament, all the districts on the North side of the River presented Memorials requesting them to stay their hands and to alter the position of the bridge. The Board, in reply, said—

"Will you undertake that there shall be no demand upon us for a temporary foot bridge and the expenditure of a large sum of money for that purpose if we accede to your request?"

The Metropolitan Board received that assurance over and over again from the Battersea people, and upon the faith of it they stayed their hands, and brought in the present Bill. If the Instruction now moved by the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) were passed, directing that no bridge should be built at all without a temporary foot bridge being first provided, of course he could not pledge the Metropolitan Board not to withdraw at once all the clauses of the Bill which related to Battersea with the intention of adhering to the scheme for which they had already received the sanction of Parliament. They would be most unwilling, however, after the representation which had been made to them, to take that course; and all he could say was, that if the hon. Member would be satisfied with an Instruction to the Committee empowering them to inquire into the matter, if that would be agreeable to the hon. Member, he, on the part of the Metropolitan Board, would be glad to accept such an Instruction, without further troubling the House.

Sir HENRY PEEK expressed a hope that the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) would accede to the request of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board, and not make it an absolute Instruction to the Committee to provide a foot bridge. It would be better to leave the matter entirely to the discretion of the Committee. He could assure the House that there was a very great difference of opinion upon the subject between the two sides of the River.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would recommend his hon. Colleague to accept the offer which had been made by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Of course, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not forget that the Bill, as it stood, was taking away from the people of Chelsea that which they had got at the present time — namely, the power of crossing the River. But after the Resolution which had been carried by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), together with the promise of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board that all these matters should be opened up before the Committee, he hoped his hon. Friend would be content with an Instruction empowering the Committee to inquire into the matter.

Mr. FIRTH said, he should be very glad to accept the Instruction in the form suggested by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board—namely, that the Committee be instructed to accept evidence as to the necessity of erecting a foot bridge.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Not "instructed," but "empowered."

Mr. FIRTH said, that it would be necessary to move an Instruction; and he would, therefore, word it in this way—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they are empowered to receive evidence as to the necessity of erecting a foot-bridge during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge."

Question put, and *negatived*.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they are empowered to receive evidence as to the necessity of erecting a foot-bridge during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge.—(*Mr. Firth.*)

NOTICES OF AMENDMENTS.

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EGYPT—MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

Colonel STANLEY: I beg to give Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply on the Supplementary Army Estimates, I shall move—

> "That this House is of opinion that before voting further Supply for the purpose of military expenditure in Egypt, the Government should give to the House a full and definite statement as to their policy in that country and its dependencies."

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: I beg to give Notice that on the Second Reading of the Representation of the People Bill I shall move as an Amendment—

> "That this House declines to proceed further with a measure having for its object the addition of 2,000,000 voters to the electoral body of the United Kingdom until it has before it the entire scheme contemplated by the Government for the amendment of the representation of the people."

QUESTIONS.

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THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is still intended to largely reduce the number of Sub-Commissioners under the Land Act; and, if so, when, and to what extent?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that this question was now under the careful consideration of the Government, and he could not at present give his hon. Friend a definite reply.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — NEWTOWNARDS UNION—MEDICAL OFFICER AND OFFICE OF CORONER.

Mr. KINNEAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Dr. Parke has been guilty of any default, neglect, or inattention in discharging his duties as medical officer of the Newtownards Union Workhouse since his appointment in the year 1870; and, if not, on what grounds does the Local Government Board request the guardians of the said union to intimate to Dr. Parke that he must resign the appointment; and, whether the Local Government Board have ever promulgated any rules or orders forbidding medical officers of unions to hold the office of Coroner, or to undertake private practice?

Mr. SEXTON asked, whether it was true that, since the circumstances mentioned by the hon. Member for Donegal, a second case of inattention on the part of Dr. Parke had occurred, and that, at the inquest which followed, the jury was obliged to accept the evidence of a medical practitioner whose knowledge of the deceased was after death?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, there is no record of any complaint against Dr. Parke in the Office of the Local Government Board with respect to the manner in which he has discharged his duties as medical officer during the period in which he has held that office; but he has, within the past month, been appointed a Coroner for the northern part of the County of Down, and has thus undertaken duties which must take him frequently to a distance from Newtownards. The Local Government Board have not absolutely required him to resign; but they have requested the Guardians to inform him that if he undertakes duties which are inconsistent with proper and regular attendance on the sick poor in the workhouse he must resign the appointment of medical officer. The matter will be before the Guardians on the 8th of this month. The Local Government Board have not promulgated any such general rule as is mentioned; but in another case they refused to allow a Coroner to be appointed a medical officer of a workhouse.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—REMOVAL OF IRISH PAUPERS.

Colonel NOLAN asked the President of the Local Government Board, If, on the 6th of February, the guardians of the Durham Union ordered the removal of James Leonard, aged 44, and his two children, aged 11 and 9, to the Tuam Union, in the county of Galway; if it appears by official documents and if it is a fact that the said James Leonard went to England at the age of twelve, and remained there over thirty years working in collieries until attacked about seven years ago by paralysis, when he entered the workhouse hospital at Lanchester, where he remained until last January, when he left for Durham; and, if the conduct of the Durham Guardians was legal, and, if legal, will Her Majesty's Government introduce a Bill which will prevent the recurrence of a case in which a working man who has spent all his working days in England can be removed to Ireland, and to prevent also the forcible removal to Ireland of children of eleven years of age who have been born and reared in England?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, we have made inquiry of the Durham Guardians, and it appears that the facts are that, although James Leonard had been in England for more than 30 years, he had never resided in any one parish for three years without receiving relief, and consequently had not acquired a residential settlement. Neither had he acquired any other settlement in England. When he broke down in health he was residing in the Lanchester Union, and applied to the Guardians for relief. As he had resided in the Lanchester Union for more than one year without relief, he was irremovable from that Union, and was admitted into the workhouse, where he remained for about six years. He left the Lanchester Union in August last, and went to reside in the Durham Union; but he was there only about four weeks before he applied to the Durham Guardians for relief for himself and his children, and after they had been in the workhouse for about four months, an order for the removal to Ireland of the man and his two children was obtained. The Board see no reason to doubt that the pauper, not having acquired any settlement in England, was legally removable to Ireland, and that the warrant properly included his two children. The law contemplated that when in such a case the father is removed his children, when of such an age as those in this instance, should not be separated from the father, although they may have been born in England, but should be removed with him. It may be observed that if the man had been born in Cornwall, and had no other settlement but a birth settlement, he would, under such circumstances, have been removable to the place where he was born, however long he might have been residing in the Durham colliery district. As regards legislation, the Government introduced a Bill in 1882 which contained a clause under which a residential settlement might be acquired by one year's residence in a Union, instead of by three years' residence in one parish; and if this Bill had passed James Leonard would have acquired a settlement in the Lanchester Union. There is now before the House a Bill which contains a similar clause.

POST OFFICE—MAIL SERVICE TO THE NORTH OF IRELAND.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has considered the representations made by the Deputation which waited on him some time back with reference to the transport of the Mails to the North of Ireland; and, whether he can hold out any hope that the Mails will be transferred to the Stranraer and Larne route, and the service be thus accelerated as suggested by the Deputation?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, the representations referred to by my hon. Friend have been very carefully considered. The question of whether it would be expedient to send the mails to the North of Ireland by the Stranraer and Larne route is still engaging the attention of the Department; but no conclusion can have been arrived at on the subject until the new time table for the accelerated service *viâ* Holyhead and Kingstown has been arranged, and, I believe, we shall be in a position to settle this very shortly.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS—FAIR RENT CASES, CO. MAYO.

MR. O'BRIEN (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state how many fair rent cases have yet to be heard in Mayo; and, whether there is any truth in the report that at the end of this month the number of Sub-Commissioners hearing cases is to be reduced?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is estimated that at the end of the present month there will remain about 850 cases to be disposed of in the County of Mayo. The question of the reduction of the number of Sub-Commissioners is now under consideration.

INLAND REVENUE—PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX—TAXES ON MILITARY OFFICERS.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will state the principle on which Staff Officers living in the wooden huts of the camps of instruction at Aldershot, and elsewhere, are called upon to pay taxes for the quarters occupied by them, while Regimental Officers living in the next huts are exempt from such liability; whether the occupation by Staff Officers of quarters in camp is in most cases compulsory; and, whether they are not, equally with Regimental Officers, liable to frequent and instant removal; and if, in such cases of removal, any refund is made of the amount paid them in advance?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, I have to say that a Staff officer holding a permanent appointment, or an appointment in the nature of a permanency, and occupying official quarters for a fixed number of years, is liable under the express provisions of the Income Tax Act to pay duty under Schedule A. He would be further liable to pay Inhabited House Duty if he had the exclusive use of a house not being a "hut" or quarters in barracks. A regimental officer, on the other hand, who is liable to frequent removal, is not in practice considered to be chargeable either to Schedule A or to Inhabited House Duty, whether he resides in a house, "hut," or quarters in barracks. In cases where Staff officers are removed, their liability is limited to the actual period of their occupation, and, on proof of any over-charge, an adjustment will always be made.

POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—EMPLOYMENT OF THE POLICE.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the policemen engaged in distributing voting papers for the election of Poor Law Guardians in the Bantry Union were driven about on a private car belonging to Mr. J. W. Payne, a land agent interested in the election; and, if so, whether they will be warned against any display of partiality while performing that duty?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, he was informed it was not the case that in the elections of last year, to which he presumed this Question referred, any policemen engaged in distributing voting papers were driven about in a private car belonging to J. W. Payne. The circumstances which probably caused the statement was, that one of the men was given a seat on a car belonging to another person named Payne, a nephew of the gentleman mentioned. The District Inspector of Constabulary stated the men were strictly cautioned last year against any partiality, and he (the District Inspector) did not believe that the caution was neglected in any instance. The caution would be repeated this year.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. HASLETT (BELFAST POLICE COURT).

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the Report of proceedings in the Belfast Police Court, reported in *The Northern Whig* of 8th September 1883, according to which a woman, residing in Greenland Street, was summoned by Sub-Constable Gallen for having sold drink without a licence, and the evidence of Gallen went to show that the house was one of evil repute and a "shebeen;" if it was also shown in evidence that the presiding magistrate, Mr. Haslett, J.P. was the landlord of the premises in question, and, upon this being stated, Mr. Haslett remarked that "he was afraid he did not get much profit out of it;" if it is usual for magistrates to adjudicate in cases wherein they themselves are implicated; if he can state why the Police, knowing the landlord, did not prosecute him; and, if any steps have been taken by the Government to express disapproval of Mr. Haslett's conduct?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has not previously been called to this case. It appears that the defendant was convicted of keeping a shebeen house, and there was not sufficient evidence that the house was one of ill-fame to justify proceedings on that account. Mr. Haslett, one of the presiding magistrates, was the landlord of the premises in respect of which the proceedings under the Licensing Act were taken. This being so, he should not have adjudicated in the case. I am advised, however, that it would not be the duty of the police to prosecute him on that account. I will consult the Law Officers as to what further notice the case demands.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—POLICE PROTECTION.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state why a police hut has been erected near the house and for the protection of a man named Daly Cahil, of Corofin, county Clare; if two police constables are also instructed to remain in his house all night, and two others to guard a farm which this man has recently taken; if he will state upon what district or part of district it is proposed to levy the tax for the maintenance of these policemen, together with the cost of erecting the police hut; and, if he will state whether any outrage has been perpetrated upon Cahil's person or property; and, if not, will he state the reason for these extraordinary precautions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the man referred to is obnoxious on account of having taken a surrendered farm, and the police authorities believe his life would be in danger if he were not protected. Two policemen, therefore, afford him nightly protection. No guard is kept on his farm. No tax has been levied or proposed to be levied for the maintenance of the police or the cost of erecting the hut. No outrage has been perpetrated upon Cahil, the protection afforded to him having been sufficient to prevent it.

ARMY EXAMINATIONS—EXAMINATION FOR THE RANK OF MAJOR.

Earl PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, How many of the Captains in the last examination for promotion in the Army failed to pass; whether it is a fact that in the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers five Captains out of seven who went up for examination failed to satisfy the examiners; whether the average service of the three senior Captains is over eighteen years, and whether two of them have distinguished war service; and, whether he will consider the advisability of altering the character of the examination, or of making some allowance for senior officers who entered the service on a very much lower standard of examination, and have proved themselves valuable and capable in time of war?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, out of 227 officers examined for the rank of major 85 failed to pass. Of seven captains in the Northumberland Fusiliers who went up five failed to qualify. The average service of the three senior captains exceeds 18 years; two of them have war service, and one for his war service received a brevet-majority. The standard of examination has not varied since 1880, and I am afraid it would be impossible to establish different standards for different officers.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS (SLIGO PRISON).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Dr. Murray, the medical officer of the Sligo Prison, has ordered the three Orangemen committed for trial on a charge of wounding with firearms at Ballymote, to the prison hospital, on hospital diet, leaving the Catholic prisoners, charged in the same case, in the body of the prison; and, whether Dr. Murray is also attendant at Sligo Workhouse, and some time ago was reprimanded and cautioned by the Local Government Board for language used by him in regard to the Catholic inmates of the house?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, it was not the fact that the three Orangemen had been removed to the prison hospital and placed on hospital diet. One of them, who was suffering from bronchitis and asthma, had been so dealt with, because he could not be properly treated in an ordinary cell. The medical officer of the prison (Dr. Murray) was also the medical officer of the workhouse. About five and a-half years ago the Local Government Board found it necessary to express their regret that he should have used language which they considered unbecoming to his position; but it did not appear that his observations had particular reference to Roman Catholic inmates.

PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877—THE REGULATIONS AS TO THE PLANK BED.

MR. P. MARTIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under the regulations contained in the 9th section of the 7th George 4, chapter 74, it was directed that prisoners were to be given beds, the straw of which was to be changed once in every two months; whether it is provided by the 12th section of "The General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877," that no rule shall be made by the Prisons Board inconsistent with any of the regulations contained in the said 9th section of the 7th George 4, chapter 74; can he state under what statutory or other authority the Prisons Board in Ireland are entitled to add to every sentence of imprisonment which may be awarded the punishment of sleeping on a plank bed; is there any such limitation on the authority of the Prisons Commissioners in England to make regulations such as that contained in the 12th section of "The General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877;" and is the punishment of the plank bed inflicted on every prisoner in England?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Sir, my right hon. Friend has requested me to answer this Question. The 109th section of the 7 *Geo.* IV., c. 74, does not contain any regulation that prisoners are to be given beds the straw of which is to be changed once in every two months. The 21st sub-section provides that each male prisoner shall have a separate bed, and shall be provided with a suitable bedding. The 12th section of the General Prisons Act, 1877, does contain the provision mentioned in the Question. There is no such express limitation on the authority of the Prisons Commissioners in England; but in neither country could a rule alter the provisions of a Statute without express power. The Prisons Board in Ireland made the rules under Clause 12 of the Act in the year 1878. The rules were settled by the Law Officers of the late Government, approved of by the Privy Council, and submitted to Parliament pursuant to the Act. The rules both in England and Ireland provide that every convicted prisoner shall sleep on a plank bed during one month of his sentence if it exceeds a month, and during the whole of his sentence if it is less than a month.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF PRISON WARDERS.

Mr. HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that any warders in local prisons in Ireland have complained of the hardship of compelling them to provide bed and furniture out of their slender salaries; whether any of them requested the Prisons Board to purchase the articles in question, and keep it out of their pay, by monthly instalments; whether the Prisons Board refused; and, whether it has come to their knowledge that, in consequence of the taking away of prison furniture from their apartments, the warders in any prison were compelled to sleep on the boards, and without any covering?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that such complaints and such applications as those mentioned in the Question had been made; but the Board had stated they had no power to comply with the requests. He had before explained that warders, while on probation, were allowed the use of public furniture, and that when their appointments were made permanent, by being confirmed, they were required to find their own furniture. It would, of course, be unreasonable to suppose that probationary warders, who might not be permanently appointed, should be compelled to provide themselves with furniture. It had not come to the knowledge of the Board that this regulation had caused warders to sleep without bedding or covering. The case of prison warders generally was before the Prison Commission.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS ACT—LEGISLATION.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he proposes to reintroduce the Charitable Trusts Bill this Session; and, if not, whether the Government would assent to the appointment of a Select Committee to investigate the powers at present exercised by the Charity Commissioners?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, he proposed, on some early day, to move for a Committee to inquire into the expediency of amending the Charitable Trusts Acts. Pending the Committee, he should not introduce any Bill on the subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE MAGISTRATES AT OMAGH, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a case of the Queen, at the prosecution of Head-Constable John Shannon, against Angus Hannan, an Orangeman, for having arms in his possession in a proclaimed district, heard at Omagh, county Tyrone, on Monday last, by the local bench of magistrates; whether the solicitor for the defendant pleaded guilty on his behalf, and said he was drunk at the time the revolver was found upon him; whether the bench, on the occasion, was composed of six justices, five unpaid, all of whom are Protestants, and the resident stipendiary magistrate; whether the five unpaid magistrates agreed to fine the defendant twenty shillings, overruled the resident magistrate, who was of opinion the defendant should be sent to prison, refused the request of the resident magistrate that his objection to the ruling should be entered on the order book, and allowed the solicitor for the defence to say to the resident magistrate, "You have no right to come here and stultify the decision of the majority of the bench;" whether, under 44 and 45 Vic. c. 5, s. 5, the defendant was liable to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding three months, or to pay a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds; what notice will be taken of the language of the solicitor, and the conduct of the majority of the bench; whether three of the justices concerned, namely, A. C. Buchanan, chairman, Major Thomas Auchinleck, and William James Harvey, had previously attached their names to a public declaration, condemning the Government for superseding Lord Rossmore, and applauding his conduct as an Orangeman; and whether Major Auchenleck is master of an Orange Lodge, and was one of those who lately issued an appeal for funds—

> "To defray the expenses of securing the attendance of loyal men to counteract any invasion by the rebels,"

the term "invasion" referring to the public meeting notified to be held at

Dromore on New Year's Day; whether, according to the last census, there are in the county of Tyrone, where this case occurred, 109,564 Catholics and 87,669 persons of all other denominations; how many Catholic magistrates are in the county; how many Catholics have been recommended by the Lieutenant of Tyrone, Lord Charlemont, for appointment to the Commission of the Peace during the twenty years of his Lieutenancy, and how many of those have been appointed; and, how soon the Irish Executive will complete their arrangements to prevent the hearing of cases involving party feeling by the unpaid magistracy, as at present constituted?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the facts with regard to the hearing of the case are stated in the Question with substantial accuracy. The Chairman of the Bench informs me, however, that he did not refuse to allow the Resident Magistrate's protest to be entered, but that he refused to have it written on the face of the order itself. The Government cannot take any notice of the language of the solicitor. It was for the magistrates to have done so. The statements with regard to the magistrates in the paragraph commencing "Whether three of the Justices concerned" are, I believe, accurate, and also the question of figures as to the religious denomination of the inhabitants of Tyrone. According to a Return recently presented to the House, on the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, the number of Catholic magistrates in Tyrone was six. The Government have no means of ascertaining how many Roman Catholics were recommended to the Lord Chancellor for the Commission of the Peace during the 20 years of Lord Charlemont's Lord Lieutenancy of the county. I have, on a former occasion, stated the Government will consider the propriety of issuing Proclamations under the Crimes Act where Party disturbances are likely to occur, so as to secure that cases arising out of them shall be heard in the manner provided by that Act—before Resident Magistrates. The charge in this case was not of a Party character. It was for carrying arms in a proclaimed district, and for assaulting a sentry. The Chairman did not know that the prisoner was an Orangeman, and I understand that a witness examined on his behalf belonged to the opposite side of politics.

BULGARIA—THE VARNA RAILWAY.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Delegates of the Bulgarian Government have broken off the negotiations on the subject of the Varna Railway, upon which they have been engaged for six months, and are leaving the country to-morrow, without making any arrangement to carry out the 10th Article of the Treaty of Berlin; and, if so, what course Her Majesty's Government propose to take to insist upon its performance?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not aware, Sir, whether the Delegates have broken off direct negotiations and left the country. Her Majesty's Government, in the event of the parties not being able to come to an agreement, will continue to press the proposed reference to the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Having regard to the answer just given by the noble Lord, I wish to ask whether he is aware that the Bulgarian Government have also broken four other stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not think that Question is quite relevant to the subject.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE GARRISON AT KASSALA.

MR. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any effort is contemplated by Her Majesty's Government for the relief of the beleaguered Egyptian garrison at Kassala?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, no expedition is at present contemplated for the relief of Kassala. I cannot enter into details; but Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that the garrison will be withdrawn without difficulty.

MERCANTILE MARINE—RETURN OF VESSELS AFLOAT, TONNAGE, AND LOSS OF LIFE, TO 1881.

MR. WHITLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will cause to be forthwith printed and circulated among the Members of this House his letter of the 14th February 1884, addressed to the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association, with the table in-closed in it, showing the number of vessels afloat up to 1881, with tonnage, men employed, and loss of life in each, with the addition of like particulars for 1882 and 1883?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, there was no objection to give a Return of the nature indicated by the Question of the hon. Member if he would move for it.

MERCANTILE MARINE—EXPLOSIVES IN SEA-GOING VESSELS.

Mr. FINDLATER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any complaints have been made to the Board of Trade as to the great danger arising from the packing of gunpowder and other explosives for sea-going vessels in copper magazines with fuses introduced therewith; was not such packing the cause of the explosion which took place on board the *Aberdeen* on Saturday last at Gravesend, although the Examiner of the Board of Trade a short time before examined the magazine and pronounced it all safe, or if no such complaints have been made, can he state whether any report of the causes which occasioned the before-mentioned lamentable accident has been furnished to the Board of Trade; and, if not, will a full inquiry be at once instituted into all the circumstances?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I have no complete information as to the circumstances mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member; but the matter is one which deserves full consideration. I have, therefore, communicated with the Home Office on the subject, and I believe my right hon. and learned Friend will order that an inquiry shall be made, and it will be conducted by Major Majendie.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether five appointments have just been made to alleged vacancies in the Indian Medical Service, though the gentlemen appointed have no chance of obtaining permanent employment for at least six years to come; and, whether this fact was notified to them before they competed in the examination; and, if not, whether the Indian Government propose to take immediate steps to fulfil the terms of the India Office Memorandum of March 1879, on the position of medical officers appointed to the Indian Army, by which these and other gentlemen have been induced to enter the service?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Sir, five appointments have just been made to the Indian Medical Service. I have explained on several occasions that, in justice to students, and on administrative grounds, it is not advisable entirely to discontinue appointments to this Service. The candidates were not informed that they have no chance of obtaining permanent employment for at least six years, because this is not the fact. Even under the present stagnation, at least 25 such appointments are held by officers of six years' service and under, and this number will rapidly increase with the present limited number of appointments. I wish also to point out that these five gentlemen were appointed under the Memorandum of 1883, which defines more rigidly the terms of the Memorandum of 1879. And, as I pointed out to the hon. Member in May last year, the conditions of the Memorandum of 1879 have been accurately fulfilled. That Memorandum never guaranteed, within any given period, those substantive appointments which alone command the higher rates of pay. I must repeat, therefore, what I said on Thursday last, that no further steps are contemplated.

HIGHWAYS—COST OF MAINTENANCE—THE GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION.

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government intend for the coming year to make a payment from Imperial Funds for the cost of highways similar in amount to that made last year—namely, a sum equal to half the amount paid out of the county rates in respect of main roads?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, in reply, said, that for the present the basis of payment from Imperial funds for the cost of highways would be the same as that laid down in the Treasury Minute of last year—namely, a sum equal to half the amount paid out of the county rates in respect of main roads.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE EDUCATION CODE.

Mr. GRANTHAM asked the Vice President of the Council of Education, Whether it is a correct interpretation of the existing Code that no child can be examined who has not made twenty weeks' attendance in the year in the school in which the examination is being held; and, if so, whether children are not always precluded from being examined whose parents are obliged to move from one parish to another at stated intervals every year, and to reside in the parish where the examination takes place for a less period than twenty weeks every year; and, whether he will introduce some alterations as will avoid such difficulty in the future?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, the Code requires, not that a scholar shall have attended 20 weeks in the year, but that his name shall have been on the books of the school for the last 22 weeks that the school has been open. This requirement is made to secure that the scholars upon whose examination a grant depends shall have been under instruction in the school for a reasonable time previous to the examination. But the requirement does not apply at all to children seeking examination for the purpose of obtaining a labour certificate. Such children need not even be scholars of the school where they are examined.

EGYPT—THE PRESS LAWS—"THE BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

MR. LEAMY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that a decree has been issued by the authority of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, suppressing a French newspaper, *The Bosphore Egyptien*, published in Cairo; and, whether the suppression has the sanction of Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether a copy of the publication objected to will be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. M'COAN asked whether the prosecution had been ordered under the existing Press Law of Egypt; and, if so, under what article?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the fact of the suppression having taken place has not yet been officially communicated to the Foreign Office; but it is a matter fully within the competence of the Egyptian Government, and one in which Her Majesty's Government would not feel called upon to raise objection or interfere.

MR. LEAMY said, he had asked if the act were done by authority of Mr. Clifford Lloyd; and perhaps the noble Lord would also state if the Government was responsible for the action of Mr. Clifford Lloyd?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have no information of Mr. Clifford Lloyd's connection with the matter.

MR. LEAMY: I shall repeat the Question on Thursday.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S PROCLAMATION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the unfavourable news reported from Khartoum, and especially to the telegram in Monday's *Standard*, which states—

> "The political situation at Khartoum has been worse. The rebels are stubborn, and refuse to accept the proffered reforms. They regard forbearance as indicating weakness, and will never make peace without bloodshed. Two thousand irregulars (i.e. Bashi-Bazouks) marched out to-day from Khartoum towards Kemaleen, against the enemy. Should any disaster overtake these troops Khartoum will certainly be lost, as the garrison consists of scarcely two thousand fighting men. In a few days the acute crisis must commence, since large forces of the rebels are massed at only two days distance from Khartoum. Self-government in the Soudan means anarchy;"

and, whether, in view of the importance of Khartoum, both for trade and for the defence of Lower Egypt, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to preserve the connection between Khartoum and Egypt under efficient British supervision?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have no unfavourable reports of the state of affairs in Khartoum. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Soudan and Khartoum has already been stated in Parliament.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked for a direct answer, affirmatively or negatively, as to whether, in view of the importance of Khartoum, both for trade and for the defence of Lower Egypt, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to preserve the connection between Khartoum and Egypt under efficient British supervision?

[No answer was given to the Question.]

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Then I shall repeat the Question to the Prime Minister on Friday.

MR. ONSLOW, who had the following Question on the Paper addressed to the Prime Minister:—

> "How it was that a telegram was sent to General Graham to issue a slave proclamation (similar to that issued by General Gordon, and which is alleged to have had a beneficial result at Khartoum) to the Arabs at El Teb, before attacking them; and, whether Her Majesty's Government could not at once telegraph to Admiral Hewett at Suakin to issue a similar slave proclamation to the Commander of the Arabs now reported to be in the vicinity of that place?"

said, that the Question, as given Notice of by him, had been turned into nonsense by the Clerks at the Table, who appeared to have regarded it as ironical. What he wished to ask was, Whether, considering the beneficial result of the Proclamation issued by General Gordon at Khartoum, and circulated in the Western Soudan, a similar Proclamation could not be issued by Admiral Hewett in the Eastern Soudan?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have not noticed the Question on the Paper; but I repeat what I stated yesterday, that Admiral Hewett has already been ordered to communicate with the leaders of the tribes surrounding Tokar and in the neighbourhood of Suakin, and I have no doubt that he and General Graham will take such steps as may be necessary to open negotiations with them.

MR. ONSLOW: That is not the Question. The Question is, whether, seeing that beneficial results are expected from the Proclamation by General Gordon in the Western Soudan, a similar Proclamation will not be issued by our Representative, Admiral Hewett, to prevent bloodshed in the Eastern Soudan? I refer to a Proclamation, and not to any specific orders.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Admiral Hewett and General Graham have general powers to communicate with the Chiefs in the manner they think best. If they think that the issuing of a Proclamation is the most effectual means of making known the views and the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, no doubt they will adopt that course.

MR. ONSLOW gave Notice that he would address the Question to the Prime Minister on Friday next.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I wish to ask the noble Lord whether the report which appears in the evening papers is correct—that General Graham has received orders to withdraw from Tokar and to retire to Trinkitat?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; General Graham has received no such orders. We have had no intelligence from General Graham since yesterday afternoon.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether Admiral Hewett had received instructions which would authorize him to issue a Proclamation to re-establish the traffic in slaves in the Eastern Soudan?

[No answer was given to the Question.]

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether the original orders directing General Graham to retire when Tokar had been captured and the garrison relieved were still in force or had been cancelled or superseded?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether there was any truth in the report which appeared in the evening papers of an intended attack on the camp of Osman Digna?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have received no information whatever of such an intended attack. No orders have been sent cancelling or superseding the orders to General Graham which I read to the House yesterday.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether it would now be convenient to the Prime Minister to answer the Question which the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had failed to answer? [*Cries of* "No!"]

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not like to remain silent—it would not be courteous for me to do so. I frankly admit that I am incredulous as to the failure of my noble Friend to answer the Question. We are not aware of any necessity whatever for taking any steps with regard to keeping open the communication between Khartoum and Lower Egypt.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought the Prime Minister must have misunderstood his Question very materially. His Question did not refer to the physical communication between the two places, but to the Governmental and the political connection between Khartoum and Lower Egypt.

MR. GLADSTONE: I certainly thought that the Question was purely local and geographical. I had no idea that the hon. Member was flying so high as to touch the question of political connection. On this subject our views and intentions remain entirely unchanged. I do not concede that those views and intentions have been challenged by the House—indeed, they have commanded the general assent of the House as far as that point is concerned.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister to forgive him for drawing his attention to the point of his Question. All that he wished to know was, whether Her Majesty's Government were prepared to maintain the connection between Khartoum and Egypt? He had not been able to gather a clear opinion on this subject from the statements which had been made in that House, neither did he think that anyone else had been able to do so.

MR. GLADSTONE: It has been announced on the part of Her Majesty's Government, in the clearest manner, that General Gordon was to go to the Soudan for the sake of conducting the important operation of withdrawing the Egyptian Military Forces from the Soudan. These Military Forces were a symbol of Egyptian power, and their withdrawal meant, in the main, the abandonment of Egyptian authority over the interior of the Soudan. That, of course, included Khartoum, which is a part of the Soudan.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does it include Suakin?

[No answer was given to the Question.]

MOTION.

——o——

DWELLINGS IN CROWDED DISTRICTS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR, in rising to call the attention of the House to the condition of inhabited dwellings in crowded districts of large towns; and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the evils of overcrowding cannot in all cases be adequately met by the enforcement of purely sanitary regulations, and that it is therefore expedient that, in the case of certain public Trusts and Corporations having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, some relaxation should be made in the rules under which loans are at present granted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners,"

said, he would make no apology for bringing this important topic before the attention of the House, for it had profoundly stirred public opinion out-of-doors, and it had been considered, although not, he thought, fully discussed, in "another place." It would, however, in his opinion, be a grave dereliction of duty on the part of that House if they were not to make some contribution to the solution of a question which was of such great importance to those whom hon. Members were sent into that House to represent. Neither did he think that the appointment by the Queen of a Royal Commission was any argument whatever—indeed, it was rather the reverse—against having a debate in that House on this subject. The Royal Commission had been appointed to make inquiries; and, no doubt, further inquiry was urgently called for. A vast mass of information, however, had been already obtained, and it would be useless to keep on heaping Blue Books on Blue Books and Reports on Reports without trying to extract from the vast collection of facts which they already possessed some kind of conclusion which might serve as a guide to the Royal Commission in the prosecution of their inquiries. It was unnecessary for him to say that he brought forward this question in no Party spirit. It would, indeed, be an exhibition of almost criminal perverseness to try and extract Party capital out of a question which was, in some respects, the most difficult, complicated, and delicate that Parliament had ever had to deal with. But if he did not propose to approach it from a Party point of view, neither did he intend to approach it from a sentimental point of view. It would be easy, by merely giving a realistic description to the House of the horrors which were to be found not many steps from the place where they were sitting, to excite the pity—and, he was afraid, the disgust also—of those who heard him; but he thought that enough had been done to arouse the interest of the public; the problem now was to direct it into the proper channels. That House ought to approach this question neither in a Party nor in a sentimental spirit, but in a critical spirit, as physicians rather than as rhetoricians. Inflated rhetoric was not only useless, but it was calculated to give the country a very false impression as to the state of things that really existed at the present time compared with what had existed in the past. He believed that the present condition of the people in London and in the other large towns was far better than it had been 40, 100, or 200 years ago. To go no further back than 40 years ago, he might remind the House that in Liverpool at that date the working classes numbered 175,000, of whom 135,000 lived in the old-fashioned Lancashire courts, which consisted of long tunnels only 9 feet wide and closed at both ends, without the possibility of ventilation, and without any proper drainage. The remaining 40,000 lived in cellars. And what did the House suppose a Liverpool cellar was like? It consisted of an underground apartment, having no communication whatever with the outer air except through the door, the top of which was on a level with the pavement of the streets. In such cellars the people lived, without ventilation, without drainage, without any possibility, he would not say of comfort or of health, but of common decency or morality. But though, perhaps, much still remained to be done in the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes in Liverpool, still these scandalous evils were swept away, and the people now had the advantage of a complete drainage system and of an excellent water supply, while the cellars and courts had been abolished, or, at least, were in process of abolition. The state of Glasgow some 30 years ago was enough to make the blood run cold. In a pamphlet recently published by Mr. James Morrison, the late Sub-Convener of the Glasgow City Improvement Trust, with regard to the state of Glasgow in 1860, the writer said—

> "At about that time, and for a period of two years, I had occasion to visit people in those localities at all hours of the day and night, and frequently to spend several hours in their houses, and the scenes then and there witnessed were of such a nature as can never be effaced from the memory. The conviction left upon my mind was that the only possible destination of the generation then and there being introduced into the world was the prison, the penitentiary, the hulks, or the gallows. There was then no hope before them, no hand stretched out to save. It was also apparent that there was an urgent necessity for a Coroner's Court in Glasgow—that is to say, if there were any propriety in preventing or punishing the crime of infanticide; but cynics may say that it was better for children to be put into the tub or choked in infancy than to be strangled at maturity by Calcraft at the public expense. The thieves' houses were tolerably comfortable; but the state of the common lodging-houses and the cellars especially beggars description, the floors thereof being packed at night with human beings—men, women, and children—like so many bundles of rags, and the walls and roof black with vermin."

What was the result of this state of things? The death rate in some of those parts was 34 in 1,000, 38 in 1,000, and 52 in 1,000, and in the year 1871 it actually amounted to 70 in 1,000. He had another caution to give to the House in considering this question. He believed it would be folly to seek for the causes of the present state of things in any peculiarities either of our time or of the social conditions under which we lived. These festering spots in big towns were not a peculiarity of England in the nineteenth century. They were to be found under Oriental despotisms, and under the system of Western freedom. They were to be found in countries where the land in general was held in large masses, as was, unfortunately, too much the case in England; but they were to be found also in countries where peasant proprietorships existed; for they were to be found in Paris. They were to be found in the crowded populations of the West of Europe; and they were to be found in countries where there was a boundless and inexhaustible provision of unoccupied land; for they were to be found in New York. They were to be found not only in towns where the practice was to let out the land on terminable building leases, but also in towns like Manchester, where the practice was to build upon perpetual leases, and in Scotland, where it was the practice to build on feus. Now, the first step towards curing the evil was to make some analysis of the complex causes which had produced it. And the first proposition he would lay down was this—that not only were the crowded and unwholesome districts of the big towns the cause of demoralization among the people, but that they were in part the result of existing demoralization. And this, it must be recollected, was a cause which could never be entirely removed. The population of the country was 35,000,000. It was idle to suppose that any system of education or police would entirely prevent the existence among them of a considerable residuum; and this residuum, consisting of the criminal classes, and of all who, from any cause, desired concealment, naturally gravitated towards the Metropolis chiefly, and in a secondary degree towards the large Provincial towns. Undoubtedly it always would be so. There always would be a population which would come into the Metropolis for purposes of concealment, for purposes of crime, to make use of the charities of the town, or to minister to its vices. He had no remedy to propose for dealing with a population of that kind. He did not believe that, except in the very slow progress of civilization, any remedy whatever was to be found. Therefore, he altogether dismissed from his consideration that particular cause of the evils which he was asking the House to consider. He now came to the second class of causes, which, in fact, consisted in the carelessness and ignorance of our ancestors. We did not make our towns; we, in the main, inherited them; and we could not remake them on the improved system advocated by the Local Government Board. We had come into a heritage of vast areas covered with buildings erected in the most insanitary manner possible. In London, in Glasgow, in Liverpool, Newcastle, and other old towns we were suffering from evils which we found, but did not create. But if only the existing law were put in force, he believed that the particular cause of which he was now treating could, on the whole, be met. Let him here put in a plea with the Government, and especially with the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Local Government Board, in regard to the construction of suburbs. London increased by about 50,000 souls a-year. Every year a vast town as large as Northampton was added to the Metropolis. Now we had, at all events, the power to see that these new towns were built according to the most approved rules of sanitary science, and we ought not to be guilty of handing down to posterity evils such as those which we had inherited from our ancestors. Might not, also, something be done in the direction of providing more open spaces and parks? When land was already thickly covered with population its value became so prodigious as almost to amount to a prohibition of any such scheme. In his opinion, the construction of streets of less than a certain width, with drainage of a certain quality, walls of a certain thickness, and sufficient air-holes in the shape of open spaces should not be permitted. But was sanitary science capable of coping with all the difficulties of the situation in the districts in the centre of big towns which had long been built over? His contention was that it was not. Some people said these questions ought to be left to the free action of competition. They said that the working classes, when they found that by the growth of warehouses or manufactories, or from other causes, they were being forced closer and closer into insanitary habitations, ought to refuse to accept such dwellings, and to leave such centres of industry until by the mere action of supply and demand wages had risen to such a point that it would be to the interest of speculative builders to provide them with buildings which were adequate for their necessities. No doubt it was greatly to be desired that the working classes should have sufficient independence to act in such a manner, but we had to remember that they had not hitherto done so. In point of fact, the first thing which the lower class of the labouring population were prepared to give up was proper accommodation in their dwellings. It almost seemed as if the taste for proper accommodation was an artificial taste. The working classes would combine to prevent a diminution of wages, and there were many other things to which they would not submit; but they would not combine to avoid being packed together in houses so closely that all proper conditions of health were violated. The system of free competition which some people advocated could not be worked unless there were a strong and effective desire on the part of the working classes themselves to live under better conditions than they did at present. We must deal with facts as we found them. The Report of the Committee on Labourers' Dwellings showed that these people would often consent to live in worse rooms at higher rents, rather than go into better rooms at less rents. We were all too ready to assume that the mere size of towns necessarily produced overcrowding. But it was not so. Overcrowding, in its more obstinate forms, depended on other conditions, which were found in London and Liverpool, but were not found, for example, at Manchester, or were found there only to a smaller degree. At Manchester the chief part of the population was engaged in large mills, and as rents rose in the city itself, the millowners, as machinery wanted renewing, took their mills from the interior to the outskirts of the town. The population followed the employers thither. But at Manchester the problem was much easier to deal with than in London, because in London industries did not depend on large mills, which could be moved, but on large centres of industry—such as the Docks, the City warehouses, or the West End shops, which could not be moved. Thus, the centres of industry being stationary, it was not possible to avoid overcrowding, if the workmen were to live, as they must, near their work. Accordingly, it was found that the evil existed most intensely in towns which, in that respect, were situated like London—in Liverpool and Newcastle, where the mass of the people were engaged in the docks and the neighbourhood of the river. On the other hand, the problem was comparatively easy at Glasgow. At one time the working people often lived in the interior of the city, and actually went to the outskirts to their work, and any relief to the overcrowding in the city itself brought the people nearer to their occupations. But the problem was so difficult in London and other places, where, under the conditions he had indicated, the evil had grown to great proportions, that it could not, in his opinion, be solved without the assistance of something which he could only describe as charitable aid. It was objected that such help demoralized the people. But, in fact, almost all the benefit which had been done to the working classes in the matter of improved accommodation had been done from charitable, not commercial, motives. There was, for instance, no class of the labouring population whose dwellings had so much or so rapidly improved as those of the agricultural labourers. That improvement had chiefly occurred on the estates of large proprietors, whose outlay on the dwellings of the labourers was not, and was not intended to be, commercially remunerative. He knew of a district in the Highlands where at this moment they could see three gradations or strata of buildings. First, they saw the original mud hovel, with a hole in the roof to let out the smoke, and in which the majority of the Highland population had lived not so long ago; then they would see the cottage, much superior to the hovel, that had been substituted for it, on no commercial grounds, some 25 years ago, and into which the landlord had with difficulty induced his people to move; lastly, they had another step—cottages as superior to the second class as the second class were to the first. Less difficulty, but still some difficulty, was experienced in moving the people from the second class to the third; but when it once came to be known how far superior these new cottages were to the old, then the taste spread, the standard of living was raised, and a vast and permanent improvement was effected in the habits of these people by aid, which, though charitable, had not, he ventured to say, an atom in it of demoralizing influence. What had been done by philanthropic persons in the country was being done largely in towns by charitable agencies. He could not pass this matter by without mentioning the name of a lady who had done more than anyone living to ameliorate the condition of the labouring people of London. The efforts of Miss Octavia Hill had reached the very lowest of the population; and although she made 4, and in some cases 5, per cent on what she laid out, still he would recall to the House that hers was really a charitable agency. She gave her time for nothing, her assistants gave their time for nothing, and she had stated in evidence that, in order to induce the people to take two rooms, she frequently gave two rooms at less than twice the price of one. That, in its essence, was a charitable aid. No doubt charity might be demoralizing; and much charity was so at this moment. He knew of a district in London into which a large population flowed for the purpose of getting a share of the great parochial charities. Rents rose in consequence, and in the end the rich houseowners succeeded, indirectly but effectually, in getting all the money of the charities, while the poor got all the demoralization. Then the work of the Peabody Trustees was, in effect, charitable—perhaps the most charitable of all organizations of this kind, as the return was only 3 per cent. But the effect of that work was not so much to reduce rents as to give better accommodation for the same rent. A single room in a Peabody building cost 2*s.* a-week; but it was a much better room than could be obtained elsewhere for the money. He thought he had now sufficiently shown that the problem could not be effectually dealt with by mere sanitary legislation, or by purely commercial enterprize, and that something in the nature of charity was absolutely required. What he asked was that the Public Works Loan Commissioners should aid such bodies as were able and willing to carry on the work he recommended. He might be told that, in making a proposal like this, he was promoting Socialism; that it was no business of the State to provide cheap lodgings, and that for the State to provide cheap lodgings would be as absurd as the State providing cheap bread. But those advocates of non-intervention were very one-sided. They objected to the State interfering with the question of housing the poor. But what were we doing, not only in London, but in all the large towns? By State interference we made large streets and new railways, and cleared districts of unsanitary houses. It was too late then to say that the State ought not to interfere, for the State already interfered in the most direct manner. The Glasgow Improvement Trust, for example, which, for the purposes of his argument, might be considered as the State, had cleared out, with great benefit to the community generally, a very large population, and had allowed that population to find houses for themselves; but they had taken pains to follow, if not the whole, at all events a large per centage, of that population, so that we could observe exactly what had happened. What had happened was, firstly, that the people had greatly improved dwellings; and, secondly, that they paid more for them. They formerly lived in those wynds to which he had referred, and they now lived in houses far better from a sanitary point of view, far better from a moral point of view, but more costly from a financial point of view than those they had left. So that the result of State action—for that was what it amounted to in this matter—had been to compel those people to lodge better and pay more rent. That that was a state of things highly beneficial to the community at large he freely admitted, and that it had worked great improvement was shown by the fact that, whereas, in 1871, the percentage of persons occupying one room only in Glasgow was 30, it was now only 24; whereas, in 1871, those occupying two rooms were only 41 per cent, they were now 44 per cent; and whereas, in 1871, only 13 lived in three rooms, now the percentage of residents in three rooms was 16. But though the action of the Glasgow Corporation was undoubtedly beneficial, it was equally undoubtedly inconsistent with the doctrine of non-intervention. Was the House prepared to go the whole length of saying that the State should not interfere in any public work? If not, could any public work be suggested more advantageous to the community? If he was told that the course he recommended would foster Socialism, he admitted frankly that he thought there was a certain danger of that. He did not, of course, admit that the principle of Socialism was involved in his proposal; but it might, perhaps, among the ignorant population which existed too much in our big towns, foster the idea that it was the duty of the State to get them out of every trouble. While he did not underrate the magnitude of this danger, still, after all, he considered that the danger was in this case worth running. He did not ask that a single sixpence should be taken out of the pocket of the taxpayer. All he asked was that the State should, under rigid conditions as to security, lend its credit to certain charitable trusts. He was perfectly aware that when the State was asked to do that, it was said that the proposal meant, in fact, giving money, and that these charitable trusts could borrow as cheaply as the State, if their security was as good. But this was inaccurate. The State could borrow cheaper, not because the national credit was safer than a first-class mortgage, but because the funds were a more convenient investment. It was this convenience he asked the State to lend—at no risk to itself; at no risk, therefore, to the taxpayer; and with great advantage to the nation. He would only say, in conclusion, that if the evil was not so acute as it had been in previous times it was more important than ever to deal with it. The result of the abolition of the Corn Laws and the introduction of Free Trade was that England must become more and more a great manufacturing country. Whether they liked it or not, it was inevitable that relatively to the inhabitants of the country districts the inhabitants of the town districts would largely multiply. If that were so, did it not behove them to make every effort to improve the sanitary and moral condition of that ever-increasing population? Millions were annually spent—he might almost say squandered—upon education. Was it, then, too much to ask the House to lend, without spending, some money, in order to promote the growth of a state of things without which mere book learning was useless or worse than usless? The question affected not us merely, but our posterity. The moral and physical evils which now existed in our large towns were evils which did not die with those who suffered under them. They went in sure succession from father to son. If they would have a posterity capable of continuing the traditions of the great English race they must do something soon and something effectual to remedy the condition of things he had described. Whether the particular remedies he had proposed would meet with the approval of the House he could not, of course, say; but, at all events, he was sure that he had done well in bringing before the attentive consideration of the House this great and difficult problem, and his own imperfect proposition for its partial solution he must leave to their kind indulgence. He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR: Sir, I have pleasure in seconding the moderate Motion of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). The public conscience has recently been so startled as to the state of many of the poorer dwellings in London that the facts seem to have come in the light of a discovery. But the facts, and even legislation upon them, are of a very old date. Queen Elizabeth was so shocked at the rapid growth of London and the state of the dwellings of the people that she acted, both by Proclamation and Statute, in her usual high-handed way, to prevent the continuance of the evil. Although in her time there were in all England only 15 houses and 82 people to the square mile, while now there are 90 houses and 446 people, she thought London with its 150,000 inhabitants was such a huge city that she forbade any more houses being erected within three miles of London and Westminster; and to prevent overcrowding in the City, she prohibited the division of a house into various tenements, giving reasons which sound singularly like those which we hear at the present day. She said—

> "Inasmuch as that great numbers of poor people inhabiting small rooms, and those of a very poor sort, and such as live by begging, or worse means, being therein heaped together, and in a sort smothered, with many families of children and lodgers in one house or small tenement, it must needs follow that if plague or sickness came among them, it would presently spread through the whole city and confines."

When good Queen Elizabeth so acted, the workmen's dwellings were without glass windows, were unheated by coal fires, while their inmates slept on straw beds. About a century after this action, at the period of the Restoration, the dwellings in England were so bad that Macaulay describes them in these words—

> "When men died faster in the purest country air than they now die in the most pestilential lanes of our towns, and when men died faster in the lanes of our towns than they now die in the coast of Guiana."

Macaulay was right, for the death rate in London from 1660-1679 was 80 per 1,000 of the living, while now it is only 21½, or nearly one-fourth. It will thus be seen that during a long period of our history there has been a gradual but great amelioration in the state of the dwellings of the poor. It is fitting that in the reign of Queen Victoria—not now, but all through her reign—there have been persistent efforts to continue this amelioration. There have not only been important inquiries as to the condition of houses, but also very effective legislation for their improvement. First there was the remarkable Sanitary Report of Mr. Chadwick, which exposed the evils in a striking way. Then there was the complete and exhaustive Inquiry into the state of large towns and populous districts, in 1844, by Sir Robert Peel's Commission, to which I will again allude. Then there was the Royal Sanitary Commission of 1870, presided over by Mr. Adderley. Lastly, there was the Select Committee of 1881. Each of these Inquiries had legislative fruit, beginning with the great Health Act of 1848; then with the Consolidated Act of 1875; and specially in relation to dwellings, we have Torrens' Acts for small areas, and Cross's Acts for larger areas. Numerous collateral Acts bearing on the same question in regard to public health, to nuisances, to loans of money, &c., have passed both Houses and have become law. It is not so much new law that is needed as a more vigorous administration of existing laws. Many towns have obtained local Acts for themselves, and have administered them with efficiency. All this the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) know as well as myself. Nevertheless, a Royal Commission has been issued, and, unless care is taken, will be used by supine authorities as a warrant for delay. But neither Government nor local authorities will be justified in delaying the more efficient administration of existing laws. They are now backed by a great force of public opinion, though this may subside. This is not the first time that I have seen a rise and fall of public sentiment on this subject. Perhaps I may make the most useful contribution to the debate by taking a general survey of our successes and failures over a period of years. I venture to do this because I was an active Member of Sir Robert Peel's Commission of 1844, and spent two years in inquiring into the state of our large towns and populous districts in every part of England. During this Inquiry I visited hundreds of the squalid dwellings in all our large towns, and passed many nights within them, so that I might see the overcrowding in its worst forms. The country at that time was as thoroughly aroused by our Reports as it is at the present day, and the great Health Act of 1848 was their legislative fruit. This gives me a line of knowledge which is useful as a base for measuring our successes and failures since that time. At the beginning of this century London was the only town in the Kingdom with more than 100,000 inhabitants; but owing to the unexampled growth of manufactures, great cities have sprung into existence, and there are now 29 with more than that population. Indeed, hamlets have grown into villages, villages into towns, and towns into great cities. Yet till 1848 there was no general sanitary law. Under the growth of manufactures wages rose rapidly, and on the abolition and reduction of taxes on necessaries their price fell. Though, therefore, the working man had greater ability to pay for better house accommodation, he did not care to meet the rapid rise in rents, which are now one and a-half times greater than when I reported on Sir Robert Peel's Commission. Thus dwellings have lagged behind the general advance in prosperity, both as to accommodation and sanitary appliances. Still, as a general result, great improvements have taken place, while mortality and sickness among the people have largely lessened. Queen Elizabeth, in her laws, confounded two things—massing and density of population, the latter always attended by increased mortality, the former not necessarily so. In the present century the massing of population has rapidly proceeded; but, on the whole, the cities have improved in health more quickly than the country districts. Thirty years ago the mortality of English towns was 27 per 1,000 living; now it is 22. Of course, this reduction is not entirely due to improved dwellings, for better drainage and water supply must also be taken into account. The important fact, however, is certain, that improved civic administration is steadily reducing the mortality of towns, and that now it is not much greater than was the mortality of rural districts 30 years ago. The towns are, in fact, rapidly gaining upon the country. A generation ago the country in regard to health was 23½ per cent better than the towns; now it is only 15 per cent. Then rural districts had a rate of deaths about 21 in 1,000 living; now it is 18½, or just the mortality of Bradford last year. There will be quite as much work for the Royal Commission to inquire about as to the dwellings in rural districts as in towns. I think that I have said enough to show that the question of dwellings is not a new one, and that, bad as is the condition of many of them now, there has been a great and sensible amelioration during a long succession of years. Many towns, like Edinburgh and Glasgow, Birmingham, Bradford, and others, have not been contented with general legislation, but have obtained local Acts which have produced marked amelioration in the dwellings of their poor. As a general result of this action everywhere, I find a great improvement in the towns, all of which I visited in 1844, and most of which I have seen in recent years. Cellar habitations have nearly vanished, and the new houses built are not in gross violation of all sanitary rules. I had registered the mortality of all of them in 1844, and it is now greatly lessened. Zymotic diseases—that is, diseases arising from filth—are less common; typhus is now rare, though typhoid is still prevalent. Typhus sometimes re-appears to warn us of gross sanitary neglect, as it does in Liverpool at the present moment. The most discouraging feature in the comparison is that deaths from consumption and lung diseases do not decrease, and they are, in my mind, a surest index of overcrowding. They still attack the adult males of our large towns in a frightful ratio. The rate of mortality from lung diseases in the country districts at the ages of 45 to 55 is a little above 2 in 1,000 living at these ages; but in Liverpool, Manchester, and the Potteries it is actually four times as great, being nearly 8½ per 1,000. In London and in Birmingham the mortality varies from 7 to 5. The mortality among females at these ages from lung diseases is a great deal less. The explanation of this startling fact I take to be this—Both males and females breathe the same air of the town vitiated with smoke; but the males are exhausted by their work during the day, and perhaps also by their dissipations, and when they return to their overcrowded homes they do not get that proper rest and good air which is so necessary to restore their exhausted bodies, and so they succumb more than females to the unhealthy surroundings. Until the towns reduce their consumptive rate to that of the country they have not attained to the proper conditions of civic life. Nottingham has nearly attained this point. Looking at the whole question, there is much to encourage us in the progress of the last generation. Many towns have acted with the greatest energy in improving the dwellings of the poor. Sometimes this very energy aggravated for a time the evils which they were trying to remove. In Scotland we found that the destruction of the slums of the cities proceeded more rapidly than the construction of new dwellings, so that increased overcrowding was the consequence. On the whole, however, houses arise in proportion to the demand. In the last decade the number of persons to a house rose very slightly in London, but in the other large towns it was less in 1881 than in 1871. The attention of the country has recently been directed, by powerful appeals, to the condition of the poorer dwellings in London, which in certain districts has a greatly overcrowded population. As a whole, London is a healthy city with a moderate mortality. This is satisfactory, as showing that massing of a population is not necessarily unhealthy. More than 500,000 persons have been added to the population of London since 1871. Indeed, its population has doubled since Sir Robert Peel's Commission of 1844, and yet its health has largely improved. In the two last decades the increase of London has been peripheral, for the central districts have decreased 8 per cent, while Outer London has increased 28 per cent. But London is a huge Province, constituted of parts still possessing a rural death rate, and of other districts intensely unhealthy. The rate of mortality everywhere is influenced by the density of population. For instance, Hampstead and St. Giles happen to have the same population of 45,000. But the area of Hampstead is nearly 10 times greater than that of St. Giles. Each house in Hampstead contains seven persons, while each house in St. Giles contains 11 persons. The mortality of Hampstead varies from 13 to 16 in the 1,000; that of St. Giles from 25 to 30, or nearly double. We cannot console ourselves with the general fact that London, as a whole, is a healthy and not overcrowded city, when we know that it contains districts like St. Giles, St. George's-in-the-East, and some parts of Westminster, which have populations equal to large cities, and with mortality greater than the worst of them. It is trifling with statistics to say that London is not densely inhabited because it has only 25,000 people to the square mile, when there is a district within five minutes' walk of this House with 278,000 to the square mile. The whole of Inner London has 107,000 people to the square mile. We have to recognize the fact that London contains rookeries in which men and women are herded together like savages, without the advantages of savage life. The American Indians on the war-path have remarkably small mortality, for the bullets of the Whites strike them less surely than do diseases in their permanent wigwams. In peace they die rapidly, but when things become very bad they change their encampments, and the mortality lessens. When the Christian missionary comes among them they are doomed, for, becoming fixed in villages, with the traditions of uncivilized life, the effects of overcrowding and filth tell upon them terribly. All this is experienced in a less degree by the inhabitants of country districts who flock into our towns. This is a necessary consequence of the overcrowding of the dwellings. Mr. Williams has recently shown that 58 per cent of the families in St. Giles live in one room —a condition of things worse than Glasgow before its recent improvements. His statistics, recently published in *The Times*, show that in London there is a state of overcrowding in certain districts which it would be difficult to equal in Liverpool or any other unsanitary town. The cry of Outcast London has not been limited to the good men and good women who are labouring for the amelioration of the poor, but it is an expression of an examination of economic results on a large scale. These, so far as regards mortality, may be summed up in a sentence. Overcrowded districts have a high death rate both among children and adults. Between 15 and 30 years of age the youth seem to be able to resist the depressing influences of overcrowding. From 30 to the end of life the mortality becomes excessive in our large towns, and, what is very serious, it increases from decade to decade. It is balanced by a diminution in the mortality of children. Increased mortality of adults at productive ages is not the whole evil. Deaths represent only the wrecks which strew the shore; they do not show the misery or loss produced by the many storm-tossed barks. The numerous and prolonged cases of sickness in these crowded districts sap and undermine the general health, so that the members of the community lose their manly health, and with this their morality and spirit of independence, while a heritage of suffering and debility passes to a succeeding generation. Fortunately, the remedy is known, though there is difficulty in applying it. Numerous building societies, such as the Peabody Trust, Sir Sydney Waterlow's, Lord Shaftesbury's, and Mr. Noel's Companies, have shown that it is possible and profitable to build good sanitary dwellings. Some of these Companies, like that of Sir Sydney Waterlow, have 25,000 tenants, so that they have a large experience. The death rate in these is less than in country districts, for it is only from 16 to 18, while it is 18½ in the country. Encouragement may be given without any violation of economic laws to go on more rapidly with this great sanitary work, and this is the limit of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). The blessings of such houses are not to be measured by death rates, but by the higher improvements in the morality and decency of the occupiers. A house which can only be occupied if rules as to order and cleanliness be obeyed is in itself a strong reforming agency. As Shakespeare truly says—

> "If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
> Good things will strive to dwell with it."

The important question for the Commission is how to apply a more rapid and efficient remedy than past efforts have produced. The rural population have no specific laws as the towns have. Torrens' Acts for small areas and Cross's Acts for large areas give to the towns laws sufficient, if administration be efficient. But country districts are lagging behind in the march of sanitary improvement, and possess no Acts to better the condition of the dwellings of the poor. That is a subject which will go far to justify the issue of the Commission. I trust that even as regards towns its scope will be wide enough. One of the most difficult questions is in regard to the tenure of building land. At present it seems impossible, at least in London, to fix responsibility on the beneficial owner of house property. A ground landlord has given a lease for 99 years, and had covenants in the lease suitable to the house and its surroundings when it was built. But in course of time the district is lowered, and the orginal covenants have no application, even if the first lessor could be found. In fact, the fixing of responsibility upon the ground landlord is impossible, for the original lessor may have a weakened and undefined interest in the property. The Commission will find useful work in inquiring into the conditions of the tenure of land and of houses, so as to fix a sharp responsibility upon the beneficial landlord. In London there is a far greater difficulty than this. How is it possible to apply unity of administration of laws in themselves good, with the Metropolis split into diverse authorities, who have the most diverse ideas as to the need of improvement at all? Even the Metropolitan Board of Works, to which we have already given large powers, do not exercise them; and if they have faith in their powers, and in the needs of the poor, I fear it is faith without works. Some of these subjects cannot be delayed till a Commission of Inquiry has reported, but may soon occupy the attention of the House. The conscience of the nation is aroused, and will hold us responsible if we do not. The working men cheered a Prime Minister when he said that the true policy of a Government was comprised in the words, "*Sanitas sanitatis omnia sanitas;*" but they will be no longer content unless this phrase is carried into action. Undoubtedly, even efficient local government will find the question of improved dwellings surrounded with difficulty. Property must have full responsibility as a condition for its possession. No one has a right to let a house so as to be a source of danger to its occupants or their neighbours. Still, it would be most dangerous for a community to undertake the supply of one of the primary wants of individual life. The conditions for the health of a community, as of an individual, are that it should be well-housed, well-fed, well-aired, and well-watered. If the wealth of the community be applied to one of these conditions, why not to all? If we are to spend the money of the provident that the improvident may have better homes, why not also extend this aid to their food? Some towns have already fallen into this dangerous error by building houses with money from rates. The Resolution before us avoids this error. It simply asks that greater facilities should be given to borrow money under existing powers by Companies and Corporations who can give ample security for repayment. When we have done all that legislation can do, an immense difficulty remains. You may improve houses, and yet find that there is a large residue of the people whose habits of life will render any house insalubrious. This residue, through the influence of education, is rapidly diminishing, but it is still large. We see this amelioration in a higher moral sense of the community, for crime and pauperism is decreasing, at least in Great Britain. But there is much that is still appalling in the habits of the outcast in our large cities. To ameliorate these a higher influence than mere legislative powers or civic administration is required. To these people friendly counsel and sympathy will alone be of avail. The landlord or his lessor may threaten them with ejection for their filthy habits; but ejection only intensifies the evil in another place. The Sanitary Inspector may go and whitewash the room or burn the bedding of the inmate who has died of fever; but his act is looked upon as the barbarous power of an invading enemy, and leads to no amelioration. As Miss Octavia Hill says in her evidence to the Committee of 1881—

> "You may hunt the poor from place to place, but you will never reach them except through people who care about them and watch over them."

These are the true friends of the outcast poor. They are missionaries of civilization who hold out a helping hand, not containing a dole of money, but a firm hand to sustain the poor when they are falling. By their wise and friendly counsel they aid in the improvement of the home and raise the social condition of its occupants. They prove to them that their physical surroundings are the causes of the disease which has brought them to the verge of ruin, and by teaching thrift and economy inculcate the great truth that cleanliness in person and in heart is a direct portal to godliness. After this civilizing mission produces fruit, increased effort arises to obtain less squalid homes, and if the demand is made, increased supply will follow. We have first to persuade the poorer classes that squalid homes undermine health and morality. When we see the dens in which many live, Shakespeare's warning is not too strong—"This house is but a butchery—abhor it, fear it, do not enter it." Numerous missions of this kind are doing noble work in improving the habits of the poor, and fitting them for those better dwellings which the law and private efforts are providing. The work is great and noble, and is indispensable as a supplement to public agencies. There would appear at first sight to be a deeper difficulty even than the habits of the outcasts, and that is their poverty. But this poverty is often the result of thriftless and improvident habits, and will be lessened as these are improved. Besides, as a fact, the evils of overcrowding dwellings are found chiefly in prosperous and not in adverse times. When times are bad, and the demand for work is slack, there are many vacant houses, and lodgers are not taken in by poor families. The striking result follows, that mortality lessens in times of national poverty. This has been especially noted in Glasgow when times are bad and public relief has to be given. I once constructed curves representing poor rates and death rates over a long period in Manchester, and they were in inverse ratio, for when poor rates rose death rates went down. The whole question under consideration is surrounded with difficulties and anomalies; but a sufficiently large experience has been obtained to encourage efficient and wise administration of existing law, and to induce us to improve the local government which is entrusted with the administration. There is one striking fact, which proves to us how much may be effected by any measure that decreases the over crowding of the poor, while it indicates, at the same time, that evils still exist on a large scale; juvenile mortality under five years of age has lessened from improved sanitary arrangements since 1870 by about 7 per cent. But in that year the Education Act passed, and a most marked improvement has come over the mortality of children at school ages. From 5 to 10 years mortality has lessened 30 per cent; from 10 to 15 by 32 per cent; and from 15 to 20 by 30 per cent. I see no other explanation of this striking improvement except one — that children have been gathered into the schools from their crowded and unsanitary homes, and have thus escaped the perils of disease. Ratepayers grumble at increased taxation for local improvements and education; they would have had to pay much more without them. Since I took up this subject, 40 years ago, the chances of life have been gradually improving. Then the mean duration of a man's life was 39·9 years. Now it is 41·9 years, or it has advanced by two years. In the short span of man's life this is a great addition, and it is a reward for the exertions of local government.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the evils of overcrowding cannot in all cases be adequately met by the enforcement of purely sanitary regulations, and that it is therefore expedient that, in the case of certain public Trusts and Corporations having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, some relaxation should be made in the rules under which loans are at present granted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that his hon. Friend who had moved this Motion seemed through the whole of his speech to be alluding to some imaginary enemy in the House who would make this, or that, or the other remark in answer to many of his points. He did not know who this imaginary foe might be. The hon. Member might have been referring to a noble Lord (Lord Wemyss) who took part in a recent debate on this subject in "another place;" but he did not think there was anyone in that House who was likely to take the strong line which he indicated. Although he did not complain of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, he had some complaints to make with regard to the terms of his Motion. The speech was an excellent one, but it appeared to have very little to do with the Motion. The hon. Member stated that his preliminary remarks carried him to the very edge of his Motion; but he never got beyond the edge. He never explained the Motion. The Motion stated—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the evils of overcrowding cannot in all cases be adequately met by the enforcement of purely sanitary regulations."

No one, he thought, would deny that proposition. But the Motion went on—

"It is therefore expedient that, in the case of certain public Trusts and Corporations having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, some relaxation should be made in the rules under which loans are at present granted by the Public Works Loans Commissioners."

The important part of the Resolution, "certain public Trusts and Corporations," his hon. Friend did not explain. He supposed in using those words his hon. Friend referred in the first place to the Peabody Trustees; but he did not know whether he meant to include the

Waterlow and other Companies who had in past times received loans from the Government. There was no explanation of this phrase in the hon. Gentleman's speech, and no light was thrown upon it by the provisions of any Act of Parliament. He imagined that his hon. Friend rather desired to increase the difference which was at present existing between the rates of the loans to the Peabody Trustees and of those to other Companies. At all events, some of his remarks seemed to bear that complexion. He, himself, in the year 1879, opposed the proposal to make those loans to the Peabody Trustees upon more favourable terms than to the other Companies. The Peabody Trustees obtained their loans on more favourable terms, because they were able to take them for a shorter period. They received their money at 3½ per cent, and the other Companies, as a rule, paid 4 per cent. He did not think that the House generally would be disposed to agree with the hon. Member in desiring to increase the difference in those rates; but he fancied they would rather be inclined to go in an opposite direction. His hon. Friend laid it down in his speech, although there was no such limitation in his Motion, that the aid given by the State ought to be given to London rather than to the country as a whole. He made a strong point of the difference between London and the country, and in some portions of his remarks he was disposed to agree with him. But the hon. Gentleman laid it down that more favourable financial consideration should be given to London than to the rest of England.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hardly go to that length. I think that London is a more difficult problem, and requires more careful treatment; but I certainly should not exclude other towns.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, in that case, he would not press the point. But his hon. Friend went on to argue that the State ought not to make a loss on the transactions. At present the State lent large sums of money to the Peabody Trustees for terms under 20 years at 3½ per cent. He presumed that his hon. Friend meant that the money should be lent at 3¼ per cent; but that was rather a small Motion to make for so large a speech, and he was disposed to think that the difference constituted a very small and trifling remedy to apply to so large a question. Before he came to other reasons which he entertained against the Motion, he would point out that loans were largely made at the present moment for the purposes of artizans' dwellings. There was a Return in the possession of the House, dated 1874, and there was a Blue Book of the Public Works Commission, dated 1882-3, which gave full information upon the subject. The Public Works Loan Commissioners could lend, under the Act of 1866, at 4 per cent. They could also lend at 4 per cent under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts of 1868-9, and by the Public Works Loans Act of 1879, 42 and 43 *Vict.* c. 77. Under that Act they could lend money to the Peabody Trustees, or any other Company, for the construction of dwellings suitable for the labouring classes at not less than 3½ per cent. In 1879, he and others who now sat on the Ministerial side of the House offered considerable objection to the proposals then made by the Leader of the House, the present Leader of the Opposition, on the ground that those proposals would form a bar to artizans' dwellings operations in the future. The right hon. Baronet who now led the Opposition, and who then led the House, deliberately fixed, or refixed, the rate of interest at that time after full consideration by Parliament. After the Bill passed, he completed his work by issuing a Treasury Minute in August, 1879. Whatever might have been the views of those who opposed the Bill and the Treasury Minute, that Act still regulated the proceedings of the Public Works Loan Commissioners. Money was lent at 3½ per cent for 20 years, 3¾ per cent for 30 years, and 4 per cent from 30 to 40 years. In 1883, this subject was again considered by Parliament, and the rate of interest laid down in the Treasury Minute of 1879 was maintained after full consideration. If the hon. Member wished the House to re-open this subject, he must remember—and the House would remember—that he (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) reason for moving the Previous Question was that a Royal Commission had just been appointed which must necessarily have this matter, among others, before it. He hardly thought the House would wish to say expressly, without a proper financial discussion, and at the time when a Royal Commission was investigating this, among other portions of the case, that it was expedient to make the difference between 3½ and 3¼ per cent. Loans had been granted on a small scale under the provisions of the Labourers' Dwellings Acts, 1866-7; they had been granted on a larger scale, to the amount of nearly £1,700,000, for artizans and labourers dwellings; and they had been granted on a considerable scale, to the amount of £705,000, to the Peabody Trustees, the Waterlow Trustees, and other Companies. This took place under the existing law; but a large number of Companies had never received any loans; they managed to do without them. Flourishing Companies on a small scale, that managed to pay their way without loans, were doing a good work in London; some of these had as Directors Members of that House, including the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington) and the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand); these Companies got on without State aid; they had a satisfactory past, and apparently a hopeful future. Having thus given the reasons which induced him to move the Previous Question as an Amendment to the Motion, he would proceed to deal with the speech of the hon. Member for Hertford, with which he was far more disposed to agree than he was with the Motion. Some of his remarks were directed against free competition upon this subject; but it must be admitted that free competition was doing something to reduce pressure. Although it might not be providing dwellings for the lowest classes of the population, it was diminishing the overcrowding which produced pressure upon the lowest classes. In one case within his knowledge the erection of a great block of model dwellings did not provide homes for the poorest—the residuum; the rents were not within the means of the people who had hitherto been living in single rooms; still the opening of the block removed the pressure from dwellings of an inferior character; the rents of these were lowered, and those who remained in them got better accommodation. This had been effected without State aid by one of these Companies; and it had also been brought about by the Peabody Trustees. In the parish of St. Luke's there was a large block of buildings of the older type, originally erected as a laundry, and containing 183 sets of rooms. On the opening of an improved block in the neighbourhood, those who had the better rooms in the old block removed to the model block; those who had the worst rooms in the old block took the better rooms, and now the worst rooms could not be let. This was an example of the good that might be done by free competition. It was undoubtedly true, as had been said, that the state of things was far better than it formerly was in London and in the large towns; that was undoubtedly true as regarded London, but it was only true in general and not universally, because there were great exceptions in London; there were parts of London that were worse than they were before. Some of the central parts had declined in the character of their inhabitants, and they had become more overcrowded than they formerly were through the system known as "house knacking." Houses that had long been occupied by single families, had been broken up into tenement houses; and thus parts of the town that were once the best had now become the worst; and many of the houses that were still the best houses in point of construction were the worst as regarded overcrowding and the character of their population. It was hard that he should have to defend our ancestors as against the hon. Member for Hertford, who spoke of the carelessness of our forefathers in building; but he had been struck with their carefulness, and some of these houses were admirably built. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was speaking rather of the arrangement of the streets.] Well, many of these central streets were wide streets; but what had happened to the big houses was that they had been broken up into tenements, and eight or ten families had been put into them. In these large houses many of our ancestors had had accommodation for their servants; they did not treat them as they ought to have done—perhaps we did not ourselves—and some eight or ten families were in rooms that were intended only for one family with its servants. The hon. Member for Hertford did not specify what was required with regard to the building of houses in the suburbs, and the building regulations for nearly all the districts around the Metropolis were better than those that were in force in the Metropolis itself, for most of the outside authorities had adopted the model bye-laws of the Local Government Board. This might not be the case in some of the rural districts, but it was true of all the larger and well-known districts. The bye-laws had been adopted, but he could not say whether they were enforced; if they were not that must be due to that want of motive power which was the main cause of defective local government and imperfect administration. The hon. Member did not attempt to prove the first part of his Motion, "that overcrowding could not in all cases be dealt with by sanitary legislation"—a truism when stated in this guarded way; but if the guarding words were omitted a good deal might be said on the point. Overcrowding, however, was a matter with which it was by no means so easy to deal as it appeared to be at first sight. To begin with, it was by no means easy to ascertain the facts; it was by no means easy to prove its existence. If you went into a notoriously overcrowded district the local authorities would tell you that information on the subject could only be obtained by inspection at night. There were legal provisions with regard to tenements, which were optional, and could be put in force by the local authority. He had acted on the power to put them in force in London; but he could not compel the local authorities to act on the bye-laws. This matter of tenements affected the question very closely, for regulations could be made to provide for the inspection of them by night. As to the difficulty of obtaining information without inspection, it was not merely that there were large families in small rooms, but lodgers were taken in, the occupants of the rooms claiming the right to take as many lodgers as they pleased. Beyond this, beds were occupied by different sets of persons by day and by night. In addition to all this, Lord Shaftesbury, a man whose name could never be mentioned in connection with this subject without a general expression of feeling as to the immense work he had done in the past, had pointed out to the Local Government Board that, to his certain knowledge, in very large parts of London—in great numbers of streets—it was the custom for people to come in from the streets and sleep on the stairs of the houses all night. That was undoubtedly the case, and it showed that it was not very easy to obtain accurate information as to the facts of overcrowding. A great deal of evidence was taken on that subject before the Committee of 1881-2. Much of it was given by the medical officers of health in the various districts of London, and they almost all stated that there was much less overcrowding now than there was formerly. But, gratifying as it might be to hear statements of that kind made, it was not so easy to prove them, and when they came to look to certain special districts, he doubted if there had been a decrease in the evil. Miss Stanley and the clergy of Clerkenwell made statements to the opposite effect — namely, that overcrowding in Clerkenwell had increased; and that was certainly the case as regarded some others of the central parts of London—for instance, Holborn, St. Luke's, and parts of St. Pancras. The attention which had been given to the subject had led some persons to doubt whether the system of long leases in the centre of the town had not something to do with the evils of overcrowding. Some of the very worst properties of London in that respect were to be found on great estates with long leases. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners had lately been setting their houses in order; but, up to very recently, some of the worst property in London was to be found on their estates—for instance, Red Cross Square. Perhaps one of the most important points that would come before the Royal Commission would relate to the management of some of the large properties in London. A great deal of evidence upon what might be called the sanitary aspect of the question had been collected by the Committee of 1881-2. Perhaps, also, such questions as the value of land as bearing on the management of great estates might be considered worthy of attention by the Royal Commission. He had lately received a communication from a gentleman who was closely connected with the management of one of those great properties in London, containing statements which he asked him (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to read to the House. [The right hon. Baronet then quoted the advice given by the writer to large landlords to try to get their property out of the hands of middlemen, and then to look after it actually, as they were bound to do morally. The writer went on to speak of the enormous profits made by middlemen, and recommended, where there were long leases still to run, that the owner should have a strict watch kept over the houses on the land, and not be content with superficial appearances. In the case of small properties which could not afford an overseer, he suggested that the help of the clergy or of charitable societies should be sought; and he observed that if every ground landlord would be really active, a great part at least of the evil would be mitigated. After describing the occupants of wretched dwellings in certain districts, the writer remarked that these poor people feared that if the man whom they called their landlord—the middleman—spent money upon a room their rent would be raised.] These were, he thought, very sound sentiments, expressed in very admirable language by one who had had much experience in connection with that subject. His hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and his right hon. Friend behind him (Sir Lyon Playfair) had both spoken very highly indeed of one whose efforts were always recognized in alluding to that matter—Miss Octavia Hill, a lady whose work was well known to him, because 14 years ago he had some experience of the operations of her system in the early part of her work; but when his hon. Friend quoted Miss Octavia Hill, he appeared to be trying to catch the support of the House by the use of a very popular name. He remembered a previous example of the danger of that practice. In a debate that occurred during the former Liberal Administration, which began in 1868, the present Baron Dowse rose from the Treasury Bench to reply to a speech made by the present Lord Coleridge upon women's rights. Lord Coleridge had mentioned the name of Queen Anne in his speech, and Baron Dowse, replying, said—

> "My hon. and learned Friend has mentioned Queen Anne; but does he mean to say that if Queen Anne were to come back here she would be favourable to this proposal?"

That retort was supposed to have some force. Now, he doubted very much indeed whether Miss Octavia Hill would in the least approve the terms of his hon. Friend's present Motion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not even hint or suggest, that Miss Hill would approve of the Motion. On the contrary, he was perfectly aware that she would not do anything of the kind.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was rather disposed to agree with the view of Miss Hill's work that was expressed by Lord Salisbury in the article which that noble Lord wrote on this subject; and it was to his mind a certain argument against the terms of the Motion that his hon. Friend was compelled to admit to the House that she and those who co-operated with her were against that proposal. Now, in regard to anything that they were likely to have carried in the form of legislation at the present time and in the present state of public opinion, he was much disposed to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross). He made that reservation as to the present time and the present state of public opinion, because he personally did not hesitate to say that he should be in favour of much more drastic legislation in respect to compensation than that which even now existed. But having made that reservation, he did not believe that the House, after the legislation of 1882 would be prepared at present to re-open the subject in that sense. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite was likely to concur at all with the hon. Gentleman who made the Motion, although he rather doubted if that was the case. At all events, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman opposite would agree with him in asking the House to decline now to entertain the proposal, seeing that the Royal Commission had been appointed of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member. He concurred with his right hon. Friend behind him, who had, however, said little in support of the Motion which he nominally seconded, in the remark he made in the latter part of his speech to the effect that the real difficulty in that case was defective local government and want of motive power. There could be no doubt that in London various parishes under similar conditions varied very much indeed. Parishes, which judging from their geographical situation, appeared to be about the same in character, differed very greatly. Some of them were good and some were bad, although under similar conditions. That was caused by the great variation in the amount of their staff, and the amount spent on sanitary work, and in the character of the Vestries. Some parishes had a very insufficient staff for the work to be done. Bermondsey, for example, with a population of 86,000, had only one Inspector to do every kind of sanitary work, and he had other work besides. St. Mary, Newington, also a poor district, with a population of 107,000, had only two Sanitary Inspectors. Another great evil was the presence on some of the local Governing Bodies in some districts, but not uniformly, of persons who were interested as middlemen in some of the worst class of property. On the Holborn District Board there was a member who owned houses in Portpool, commonly called Purple, Lane, one of the worst parts of the neighbourhood. Then, again, in St. Pancras some property, which had been repeatedly reported upon by the medical officer and condemned by the surveyor as buildings which ought to be demolished, belonged to a Vestryman whose father was, and whose grandfather had been on the Vestry. On the other hand, he could mention cases in St. James's and the Southern parishes, where, in spite of the presence of such men, the Vestries had, to their honour, taken action. He was sorry to be obliged to speak in such a manner; but it was necessary to turn the public attention to these facts. He was sorry to say that in Clerkenwell the two great dictators or potentates of the parish who had the control of the Vestry and its leading committees, one of them being chairman of the principal committee, were the largest owners in the whole district of Clerkenwell of bad or doubtful property. The Royal Commission would have, perhaps, to go beyond the useful labours of the Committee of 1881-2, and make an inquiry into the question from this point of view—whether, in fact, it was not the case that many leading members of the local authorities were large owners of property of this description. In Clerkenwell there were 14 house-farmers on the Vestry and 12 publicans, who seemed to work very much with them; and that state of things had undoubtedly led to insufficient care being taken by the Vestry for the condition of that parish. There were places, however, far worse even than these, especially in the Italian and other foreign colonies —in Holborn and St. Pancras; and the foreign landlords were far worse than any English ones—in fact, he could only describe the condition of these colonies in the language of the 10th Psalm. He could not leave the subject without saying a little in defence of Whitechapel, in reply to his right hon. Friend (Sir Lyon Playfair). The death rate in that parish was in reality greatly swelled by the returns of mortality from certain hospitals in it. The worst group in London was the central group. St. Luke's was not a parish with house-farmers on the Vestry, as these had been swept out a short time before; but it was a bad parish. The medical officer of the parish had returned a report in answer to the Circular sent out that there were no areas in regard to which official investigation was called for. The Vestry of St. Luke's were now attempting very late in the day, by a sort of death-bed repentance, to take steps under Torrens's Act. The district of St. Pancras was a bad one in spite of its having an admirable medical officer and Vestry official; it was undoubtedly in a most disgraceful state. In the South of London, again, they had a bad state of things, though he hoped that some real improvement had been made by the Committee organized by some Members of that House. This was a subject of such interest that anyone could talk on it for any time. He himself had made personal inquiries into the subject, and there were those outside the House as well who had devoted their lives to it. He joined in a general concurrence with the hon. Member, and still more with the hon. Gentleman behind him (Sir Lyon Playfair); but he thought that the time had not yet come for such steps to be taken as were now proposed. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Previous Question.

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he had taken a deep interest in this matter for many years. He was sorry to find the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board bringing forward the Royal Commission as a ground for putting off any action at all. He was afraid that the local authorities would be only too willing to stay their hands until the Royal

Commission began, without any example being set to them, as they were not so very anxious to stir in the matter. He would, therefore, very much rather the right hon. Baronet had boldly stated his objections to the Motion, if he really seriously entertained any. He regretted to hear the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Lyon Playfair) state that unity of action was necessary, and that that depended upon the formation of one great Corporation for the whole Metropolis. He hoped they would not delay taking action in these matters until the creation of such an unwieldy body. Nor did he believe that, if such a body unfortunately ever existed, it would pay sufficient attention to, or grapple with, these vital matters. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had complained of the position of the local authorities at present existing not only within London, where owners of properties were on the Vestries themselves, but also in districts round London where they had not adopted bye-laws. The real fact was that the public attention had now been properly called to this important subject. One of the greatest pleasures to him (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was to find that the temper of the House and of the country was entirely different from what it had been in 1875, when he himself had had the greatest difficulty in arousing the attention of the country, and had to struggle severely against some who were now taking an active part in the work. He believed that the growth of public opinion accounted for this change, and that to that was owing the fact that they were at last seriously considering what remedy could be found for a state of things which was a disgrace to any civilized community. There were places outside London, in the suburbs, where there were no bye-laws; and if they did not allow fresh houses to be built which would produce disease and death, they ought to take care that the houses that were built should comply with all the necessary conditions of health, and that they should be maintained in a proper sanitary state. He had always maintained that property had its duties as well as its rights, and when the rights of property were protected, its duties should be enforced. His belief was that the present was the time for grappling with the evil; and if the local authorities felt that, it needed only that they should put their hands to the plough to enable them to deal with it. There was no doubt that the evil started from many points. He believed that Torrens' Acts, and those connected with his own name, had provided a great weapon for grappling with the difficulty. When the Act of 1875 was introduced, he remembered being told by a gentleman of his acquaintance that the only two characteristics of the Bill were Communism and confiscation. At present they knew that too much compensation was often obtained, and that the Compensation Clause was struck at in 1879, and again in 1881 and 1882, though he did not think the House or the country would allow the question of compensation to be opened again. He was much disappointed at the absence of the hon. Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and he hoped that very soon a clean sweep might be made of all buildings unfit for habitation; and he trusted that the Vestries also would see that under the vigilant eye of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board it was necessary for them to put their houses in order and to prepare themselves for action. The next question was, how were they to avoid, in making this clean sweep, the necessary evils of pulling down? There must not only be pulling down of these houses; there must also be reconstruction. He believed as far as the great mass of people were concerned it might be left to private enterprize and associations to provide the accommodation necessary for housing the people whose old habitations were destroyed. There would be great danger in giving Corporations the power to erect buildings for them, and to hold this class of property. With regard, however, to the lowest class, no doubt something might be done without danger. They could not turn them out into the streets; they did not want to send them into the workhouse; and for such extreme cases he believed it would be necessary to provide temporary accommodation. The authorities of the City of Glasgow, which was a sort of pioneer in this matter, when they made their alterations some time ago, erected some buildings as cheaply as possible, which they were able to let out as lodgings, as low, he thought, as 3½*d.* a night, to the persons who were thrown out of the old houses. These new buildings were filled immediately in this way, and that answered very well. The City of Edinburgh, on the other hand, put up buildings; but they did not answer, and had to be sold. In dealing with the lowest classes private charity might be allowed some scope. At the same time, the question must be approached with care. To live in wholesome dwellings was acknowledged to be one of the necessaries of life, but it was only one, and it would be just as demoralizing to give the lower classes their houses to live in as it would be to give them food or clothing. Caution was, therefore, necessary; and it was only in dealing with the lowest classes that something like temporary accommodation might be afforded them. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the evil of long leases. For his own part, he had always been astonished that the section of the Act of 1875 was not more utilized, by which the owners of the freehold were enabled to improve this class of property, the bad condition of which was often not attributable to the freeholder at all. He could only attribute its disuse by the owners of property to their ignorance of the existence of the provision. Great thanks were due to the President of the Local Government Board for his research in discovering that many persons on Vestry Boards were themselves owners of objectionable household property and prevented any steps being taken for dealing with it as it should be dealt with. They could not reprobate too highly, or speak too strongly against, such persons who, although they were placed in authority, held their hands because it would be against the interest of their own pocket. The thanks of the House were also due to the hon. Member for Hertford for the way in which he had introduced this Motion to the House, in the subject of which he was deeply and warmly interested. So far as the labours of the Royal Commission were concerned, he was quite sure every Member of that Commission would do all he could to assist the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in coming to a sound conclusion on this important question.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW said, the question was one in which he was much interested, and as the Company with which he was connected had covered 24 acres of land with blocks of buildings for the working classes, he thought his experience might furnish the House with some facts which might be of service to the discussion. He believed there was no matter which could more fitly engage the attention of the House and the country than the solution of the problem—how to provide better houses for the poorer classes of the people, and to determine to what extent, without interfering with the self-reliance and independence of the working-classes, State aid could be furnished in support of private effort. He regretted that the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not go into the question of loans more fully, and explain how he proposed that the Government or the Treasury was to render the assistance which he had shown to be necessary. With regard to overcrowding, no one could doubt that it had been proved. It was terrible to think, moreover, what would be the state of things now owing to large improvements which had taken place if legislation had not stepped in. He was afraid this continual inquiry—a Committee one year, and a Royal Commission the next — would have the effect of staying for a time the hands of those who had been doing good work, and also in justifying the tardy movements of local bodies in carrying out the powers with which they were invested at present. There was one point to which he was anxious to refer. To a large number of the working people of London it was an absolute necessity that they should not move away from the locality in which they lived. He referred to those who had "bespoke work." For this class of people to remove from a neighbourhood meant the loss of the whole of their connection. For instance, in such a neighbourhood as that of Oxford Street a room there would fetch more than twice as much as a similar room in the East End or over in Clapham. What what was the cause of the congestion? The difficulty in obtaining sites. Something had been done by the Artizans' Dwelling Act; but more might have been done if it had not been felt by those to whom the Act was intrusted that it would be too burdensome to the ratepayers. A good deal had been done by the owners of large estates. He might instance the Duke of Westminster as foremost amongst them. Within 20 minutes' of that House he could put his finger on seven or eight large blocks of houses, all on the Duke of Westminster's property. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners had also offered facilities; they might have done more; but he did not think they ought to blame them. The question of rent was a serious consideration for the working man. It was the wife, who was at home, that managed the business, and she knew well that a good house meant a temperate household. Going into details as to existing buildings, he might mention that the rent per room in the Peabody Buildings was 1*s.* 11*d.* per week; in his own Company's houses the rent was, on an average, 2*s.* 2*d.*; but the explanation was that the rooms were made brighter with paper, and were worth more money. These efforts had all been made without State aid; and he defied the President of the Local Government Board to say that of all the money borrowed, the State had lost one farthing interest upon the loans granted to these Companies. Upwards of £2,000,000 had been advanced to these Companies, and yet no delay or failure had occurred in the payment of interest. Indeed, the State had been the gainer, for the money was borrowed at 3 and lent at 3½ and 4 per cent. He supported the Motion, because he considered some relaxation should be made in the rules. It was said that some of the small Companies got on well without loans; but they had been unable to avail themselves of them, because the societies could not afford to make the annual repayments. Give them the money at 4 per cent for 40 years and they could afford to do it. He appealed to his hon. Friend to withdraw the Motion, and to the President of the Local Government Board to withdraw his Amendment, as he did not wish to see the matter pressed to a Division. He admitted there was a difficulty in dealing with long leases. There was much property which should be pulled down and better property erected. He desired, from a sanitary point of view, to refer to the experience they had in these buildings of the death rate. The houses were not in one isolated district. They were at Bethnal Green, in the centre, in the West, and in the North, and they had been tested for an average of over nearly 20 years. The last return of the death rate in those dwellings was just over 17 per 1,000, as against 18 over the whole country, and 21 per 1,000 in the Metropolis. This was in the face of a higher birth rate, which meant a higher death rate. He supported the Motion of the hon. Member for Hertford because he believed it was sound and right; but after the valuable discussion which had taken place he hoped the hon. Member would accept the suggestion that had been made, and allow the Motion to be withdrawn.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, that reference had been made to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; and he could not but wish that the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley), or the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), had been present to answer for them. The circumstances under which this property came into the hands of the Commissioners ought to be borne in mind when their action was criticized. It was the object of the Acts which they administered to put an end to the vicious system of leasing which prevailed largely on Church property; and in Southwark, in particular, there was a great complication of interests as between lessees and sub-lessees. So long as the leases and sub-leases subsisted the Commissioners were debarred from interfering, and it, no doubt, might have been said that some of the bad class property was on their land; but, so far as the Commissioners were concerned, that was in course of passing away. Some of the land had been let for building, and many of the worst tenants would soon be cleared. The hon. Baronet the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) had borne a favourable testimony to the action of the Commissioners in other parts of London—and no one knew better than he did what their action had been for many years past. At Finsbury and elsewhere the Commissioners had offered every facility for the erection of labourers' dwellings, in connection with the Waterlow and other Companies. The right hon. Gentleman opposite knew that the population could not be displaced at once. Arrangements for their removal must be made by degrees, so as to cause no inconvenience and throw no pressure upon the labouring classes. The question had been under the careful consideration of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for some months past, and the very exhaustive Report of a specially-appointed Committee was on the point of being issued, and would be moved for in both Houses.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he hoped that the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would adopt the suggestion which had been made, and withdraw the Motion, after the very satisfactory debate which had taken place. In that case, of course, his right hon. Friend would withdraw the Previous Question. The hon. Member would see that there was no feeling on the part of the Government adverse to his Motion; but careful consideration would be necessary before he could see his way to lowering the interest on loans made by the Public Works Loan Commission. The first Act under which these loans were made was introduced by himself, when some doubts were expressed as to whether this was a proper purpose to which to apply public money. He had never doubted that it was; but he could not say at the moment whether the concessions asked for could be granted. He would be glad if the hon. Member could enable them to avoid the necessity of moving the Previous Question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that it was hardly possible for him to resist the appeal which had been made to him, although many Gentlemen were anxious to speak. The debate had been of an extremely interesting character, and he had certainly no reason to complain of it. As far as he was concerned, he accepted the suggestions which had been made.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE asked leave to withdraw the Previous Question.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, he did not consider it was the business of the State to erect buildings for the working classes; but he held that they should offer all inducements and facilities. He suggested that much might be done by reducing and removing taxation, which practically increased the rent of the poor, such as the Carriage Tax, and the Railway Passengers Tax, which made it more difficult for the railways to run cheap trains. If such taxes were abolished, poor people would be enabled to go into the suburbs, where cheaper houses might be obtained. He was also of opinion that many local rates ought to be divided between the owner and the occupier.

Mr. BRODRICK said, he hoped that Her Majesty's Government as a body would take rather a different view of this question from that which had been taken of it that night by the President of the Local Government Board, whose speech was calculated to confirm some of the worst suspicions that had got abroad—that during the existence of the Commission a good deal of the work that might now be done under existing legislation would be allowed to slide. He trusted that before the debate closed the Government would give the House some assurance that they intended to set an example to the local bodies by taking immediate and prompt action in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman himself had taken an active part in this question since Lord Salisbury's celebrated article, and public opinion was in a state of ecstasy with regard to it. Since everything, therefore, was ripe for action, and seeing that the country was willing to approve of any measure which the Government might think fit to bring forward in relation to this subject, he trusted that the Government would give an assurance that they intended to set a good example in the matter.

Previous Question and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at ten minutes before Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 5th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—William Meagher, esquire, *for* Meath County.

Select Committee—*Special Report*—Committee of Selection.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—National Debt * [128].

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment [8], *put off;* Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) * [75].

Committee—Report—Mr. Speaker's Retirement * [123].

QUESTIONS.

——o——

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE TWELFTH RULE (NOTICES ON GOING INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY).

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I wish to be allowed to put a Question to you, of which I gave you Notice yesterday, in regard to the Notice of Motion which my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) gave yesterday. I wish to know whether it will be competent for him to move that Motion as an Amendment on going into Committee of Supply on the Supplementary Estimates to-morrow?

Mr. SPEAKER: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that the Standing Order of the 27th of November, 1882, is imperative on this subject. My Predecessor in this Chair held that the New Rule provided that the Speaker should leave the Chair on Mondays and Thursdays without Question put, except on first going into Committee of Supply on the Army, Navy, or Civil Service Estimates; and he added that, if the Supplementary Estimates were proposed on Monday or Thursday as the first Order of the Day, it would be his duty, as soon as the Order for going into Committee of Supply was read, to leave the Chair. It will be my duty, therefore, if the Supplementary Estimates are proposed as the first Order of the Day to-morrow, to leave the Chair without Question put. It will not be competent, therefore, for the right hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Stanley) to move his Amendment.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Under those circumstances, I will ask the Prime Minister if he can afford any facilities for bringing forward the Motion of my right hon. and gallant Friend—whether he cannot make some arrangement by which this Rule, which applies only to the case when Supply stands as the first Order of the Day on Monday and Thursday, will not shut out the Amendment?

Mr. GLADSTONE: With respect to making any arrangement against the operation of the Rule, and by which the Rule may be avoided, I do not at all know to what arrangement the right hon. Gentleman opposite alludes, and I cannot give any answer to it until I know to what arrangement he alludes. I understand him to ask me whether we could give facilities for bringing the Motion on. I understand that in the usual sense, whether I could arrange that Supply should not be taken to-morrow, and that that day should be left vacant for the raising of any substantive Motion in the shape of a Vote of Censure upon the Egyptian policy of the Government. To that I must answer in the negative; it would be impossible for me to do that. But, in giving that answer, I may state that the arrangement we have made was made for the convenience of Public Business, and in the full belief that we were meeting the wishes of the House; and I thought that the right hon. Gentleman himself distinctly intimated to us that it was his desire to have the Vote for the Egyptian Expenditure—the Supplementary Military Estimate—taken as soon as possible; and, likewise, that when that Vote was proposed, a fresh discussion should be raised on the Egyptian policy of the Government. For that we thought we had provided. Considering that three weeks of the Session were passed before the Address was reported; considering that it is only a fortnight since a Vote of Censure on the Government for its Egyptian policy was disposed of after five nights' debate; considering that we have had seven other debates on our Egyptian policy of shorter duration; and considering that it is very necessary to get on with the Supplementary Estimates, and having regard to the principal Business of the Session, I must own that I am not prepared to set aside Supply to-morrow, or to consent to be a party to such an arrangement, in order to make room for such a Motion.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: In reference to part of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, what I meant was this—that the Rule which excludes my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) from making a Motion only applies in cases where Supply is taken as the first Business. If it is taken as the second Business instead of the first, that difficulty would not arise; and my suggestion was that some other Order of the Day—such, for instance, as the Bill relating to the retirement of the late Speaker—might be put first. In that case the difficulty would not arise, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider that point.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I would also ask the Prime Minister whether he has observed that, even if he made that arrangement, no vote could be taken on the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel Stanley), because I have an Amendment which would come before it, and I mean to take a Division upon that Amendment?

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman does not answer my Question as to whether any arrangement could be made.

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; it was a request to me to consider a certain subject. I did not think an off-hand answer was necessary. Indeed, we cannot be expected to make an off-hand answer, and it will be necessary to have regard also to the point which has been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere).

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then I will repeat the Question before the close of the Business to-day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 8.]

(*Mr. Barry, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. BARRY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he approached the important subject with less diffidence than he otherwise would have done, because he was strengthened by the reflection that since the Bill of 1881 was before the House there had been a considerable advance in public opinion upon the subject of Land Reform in Ireland. It would be his duty to submit to the House to-day some of the proposals which hon. Members on those Benches thought should be carried into effect in the interests of the people of Ireland. There was something approaching to a common agreement between all sections and parties in Ireland as to the necessity for some of the proposals which he was about to submit; and, under these circumstances, it was unlikely that the proceedings which followed the passing of the Land Act of 1870 would be repeated. He remembered that after the passing of the Land Act in 1870 the British mind was, so to speak, hermetically sealed upon the question of Land Reform in Ireland. He then, like the late Sir John Gray, endeavoured to induce the House to sanction an amendment of the Land Act; but every effort was futile, as everyone seemed then to think that they had arrived at the final settlement of the question of Land Reform in Ireland. Matters were then allowed to drift on, until they culminated in the events of the past few years, when the distress in many parts of the country amounted to a state of famine. It was not until then that the House was prepared to search further into the question of Irish Land Reform. He was bound to say, in justice to his hon. Friends who sat around him, that when the Land Bill of 1881 was before the House they were subjected to no small amount of adverse criticism on account of the position they had taken up. Their intentions and their motives were grossly misrepresented. It was, indeed, openly stated that their action was calculated and intended, not to assist, but to throw obstacles in the way of passing the measure, so as to maintain a state of acute agitation in Ireland. He imagined, however, that everyone would agree with him when he now stated that the House had since had abundant reason to change that opinion. It was now pretty generally admitted that the Act of 1881 ought to be reformed if it was to be of any service to the people of Ireland; and if it was to be made to work satisfactorily, it must be amended in the direction proposed by the Irish Party when the Bill was before the House. In addition to the original shortcomings of the measure, their position had been strengthened and reinforced by certain decisions of the Superior Courts, with which many of them were familiar—especially the decision of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," by which one of the great principles of justice contained in the Act was abrogated and nullified. In moving the second reading of the Bill it was not his intention to discuss any of the minor details, which would be more fittingly dealt with in Committee. He would lay before the House, as well as he could, four of the leading features of the Bill. The 1st was a very brief clause, which provided that the judicial rent should commence from the gale day following the date upon which the tenant first applied to have a fair rent fixed, with power to the Court to suspend evictions pending their decision. The 2nd clause simplified the sale of tenancies, and gave the tenant greater freedom of action. The 3rd clause dealt with the question of town parks. The 4th clause defined the term "improvements." The 5th clause dealt with the question of the tenants' improvements, and the 6th, 7th, and 8th were minor clauses in their object intended for the safeguarding of the tenant's right to his own improvements. The 12th and 13th clauses proposed to extend the scope of the Purchase Clauses. The remaining sections of the Bill were, in the main, consequential. With regard to the portions of the Bill fixing the date of the judicial rent from the gale day following the application to have a fair rent fixed, and granting power to the Land Commission to suspend eviction whilst the case was at hearing, he would ask the House to remember that when the Bill of 1881 was introduced by the Prime Minister, the original clause provided that the fair rent should run from the gale day following the application. He did not remember at the moment whether the alteration was made in Committee or in the House of Lords; he rather thought the latter. He thought he would not have much difficulty in showing to the House the absolute injustice of the arrangement. He could best do so by submitting the condition of the Land Courts according to the last Return, which showed that of the total applications made to the Land Court, 91,856, there were, up to the 31st of August, 1883, only 42,768 decided, and 19,163 withdrawn or otherwise disposed of, leaving the enormous balance of undecided cases at 29,925. He would ask the House to consider the effect of leaving these 30,000 cases in abeyance with the unfortunate tenants. As the law at present stood, a farmer on one side of a road might get his rent reduced in a prompt manner, while his next neighbour, having made an application for the fixing of a judicial rent, might—and in many cases had to—wait six months, 12 months, or even a longer period before he could obtain a decision, having, in the meantime, to pay a rental of 25 or 30 per cent higher than that which was borne by the farm next his own. Nothing could be more calculated, he need hardly say, to promote dissatisfaction, discontent, and disturbance amongst the tenants. The immense mass of arrears in appeal cases was enough to establish the fact that appeals were lodged for no other purpose than that of delay. That number was 10,000, and out of it, up to August last, 1,934 were decided, 1,459 withdrawn or otherwise disposed of, leaving a balance of 6,687 still to be heard. The rate at which the appeal cases were disposed of was 1,000 per annum, so that it would take seven years for the Court to get through the appeals lodged up to the present. But an analysis of the Returns from the different counties showed something worse. In the county of Antrim, 841 appeals were lodged, 284 were settled, 75 withdrawn, leaving 682 still to be dealt with. In the County Wexford, 93 appeals were lodged, 10 heard, 11 withdrawn, leaving 72 to be dealt with. In the County Kerry, 328 appeals were lodged, 63 heard, 4 withdrawn, leaving 261 to be dealt with; and in the County Mayo 459 were lodged, 39 heard, 43 withdrawn, leaving the enormous balance of 367 to be dealt with. To show that these appeals were, for the most part, vexatious and intended to cause delay, he need only refer to the net result of the Appeal Court for the one year ending 31st August last, which was that 1,079 cases were dealt with, giving a total reduction of £742 on judicial rents of a total of £28,000, or less than 15*s.* in each case. The object of the appeal, therefore, was to secure an extension of the time during which the excessive rent should be paid; and until a change was made in the direction he suggested, it would be found that the clause as it stood at present in the Act would be a fruitful source of discontent and dissatisfaction for the Irish tenantry, and it was because the clause so stood at present that there was such a meagre result as regards the cases settled out of Court. But the portion of the Land Act which promised to give most satisfaction in Ireland was that which reserved to the Irish tenant an absolute right to his own improvements; and there was no part of the Act on which the Members of the Government, and particularly the Prime Minister, made such emphatic and specific declarations. The Prime Minister distinctly laid down the principle that the tenant's improvements were absolutely his own property, and that no length of enjoyment would deprive a tenant of the right to his own improvements. Unfortunately, owing to a compromise with the House of Lords, what appeared at the time to be a very innocent Amendment was proposed by the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) and adopted by the Government. By that Amendment the following words were added to the Improvement Clause:—

> "For which the tenant or his predecessor in title shall not have been paid, or otherwise compensated for by the landlord or his predecessors in title."

He acquitted the hon. Member of any knowledge that his Amendment would bear the interpretation which Irish Judges gave it—the hon. Member was a Gentleman who had shown much sympathy for the suffering Irish tenants. He did not wish to say anything offensive of the Irish Judges; but they all knew that they were gentlemen trained up in the old traditions of landlordism, and although the late Lord Chancellor Law, than whom no person in the House, during the passage of the Act, displayed a greater knowledge of the subject, or a more thorough mastery over all its details, and—[Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!]—whose unfailing courtesy would be always gratefully remembered by the Irish Party, although he went out of his way to declare that no such construction of the words "otherwise compensated for" could be in the minds of the Ministry, his brother Judges declared that length of enjoyment should be taken into consideration in deciding the question of the tenants' improvements. Now, all he asked was that this principle of equity and justice, so explicitly laid down by the Prime Minister in his Land Bill, and so abrogated by the Irish Judges, should be re-affirmed and restored, so that by no process of legal jugglery or legerdemain could Irish tenants be deprived of their property or their improvements. He regarded this question of tenants' improvements as the very corner stone of the Irish Land Question. The Purchase Clauses, inclusion of leaseholders, town parks, would all remain, to a large extent, inoperative, so long as the question of improvements was left in its present shape. How could they expect rest or contentment as long as a tenant was called upon to pay twice over for his own property? It was absurd to expect that in one, five, or ten years this question would solve itself until tenants' improvements were placed beyond all doubt. And now, incidentally, he would remind the Representatives of the Territorial Party in the House that it was a rather dangerous principle for them to lay down that length of enjoyment was sufficient compensation for improvements. What if the public mind woke up some fine morning, and declared that lengthened enjoyment of the fee simple was sufficient compensation, and that, therefore, the great hereditary landowners should surrender their property right off? [*Laughter.*] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) might laugh; but what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander, and he would like to have it explained how this principle could be applied equitably on one side and not upon the other. He would illustrate his argument by mentioning the particulars of the case of a farmer named O'Halloran, of Rathbane, County Limerick. This farmer was now nearly 70 years of age, and in 1850 he took a farm of 28 acres at £2 14*s.* an acre. In the survey, he might mention, the place was described as "Rathbane bog." The tenant improved the land very much. About 1863 the trustee came to the tenant and said—"O'Halloran, we want money very badly, and you must pay so much more." The money, it appeared, was wanted to pay some jointure. The tenant of whom he was speaking was compelled to take a lease, and to pay the rent imposed upon him during the minority of the person to whom the property descended, or until the property was sold in the Landed Estates Court in 1872. When that event came he made an application to the Board of Works in Ireland for a loan to enable him to buy his holding, and an advance was promised to him in the event of his becoming the purchaser; but a wealthy man, who had determined upon becoming a landlord, bid a larger sum than he could afford to pay, and so became the possessor of the land, to which he had no previous relation. This gentleman served him with a notice to quit, with the alternative of paying an increased rent of 50 per cent upon what he paid for the farm when he took it in 1851, and 50 per cent more than Griffith's valuation. Last year he made an application to the Commissioners and obtained a reduction to a sum which was still 20 per cent over Griffith's valuation, notwithstanding that the whole of the work which had increased the letting value of the property was done by the tenant himself, the owners of the soil not having expended a penny in the business. According to the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," all the improvements made by that unfortunate man would revert to the landlord. Such a state of the law was an outrage on every principle of equity and justice, and he called upon the House to remedy it. The next point of the Bill provided for the inclusion of leaseholders, who were outside the operation of the Act of 1881. The Lease Clauses of the Act were so overladen with difficult conditions that their result had been very meagre; so that, out of 1,500 applications up to August last, the number of leases declared void was only 116. Judge O'Hagan expressed the opinion that all those leases, so flagrant were their conditions, could have been upset in any Court of Equity, even if the Land Act had not been passed. The leaseholders in Ireland, who numbered 100,000, and farmed between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 acres of the best land in the country, were also the most rack-rented landholders in Ireland. He could easily understand the desire of the landlords to exclude leaseholders from the operations of the Bill of 1881, because they knew that if leaseholders had access to the Courts the *exposé* of the conditions on which leases were imposed upon the farmers would be nothing short of terrible. It was, therefore, proposed to include leaseholders among those who would receive benefit under the present Bill, under certain conditions which would not interfere with the ordinary conditions and covenants in their leases, some of which conditions might be, and probably were, quite right and proper. It was an unmitigated evil that a man who had no option but to accept a lease should be called upon to pay 25 or 30 per cent for his land more than was paid by his neighbour who was not a leaseholder, and should have no right to apply to the Court to fix a fair rent. He had a great respect for freedom of contract—manufacturing and commercial industry without freedom of contract would be impossible—but it was absurd to urge the argument of freedom of contract as against giving to leaseholders the right which was proposed to be conferred upon them, because anyone with the most superficial knowledge of the circumstances must know that the landlords had absolute power, control, and authority, while on the other side there was abject helplessness—the leaseholder must accept the conditions imposed upon him, no matter how onerous, odious, and extreme they might be. The next and only remaining important point was the Purchase Clauses. Great hopes were entertained regarding the Purchase Clauses of the Act of 1881; but they had proved disappointing. They had no vitality, no elasticity; they were practically inoperative; but, fortunately, both tenants and landlords were vying with each other in their desire to bring the question to a satisfactory issue, and it was not necessary for him to labour the point. The total number of applications made under these clauses was 173, and the total amount of money granted was £104,173. As he had said, landlords and tenants were now vying with each other to bring this purchase question to a successful issue; and since Parliament had assembled a Memorial, signed by 81 Members, representing all the Irish Members in London, had been presented to the Prime Minister, directing attention to the question. Therefore, he found himself relieved from setting up any arguments in favour of tenants purchasing their holdings. He might quote the example of Russia, where the experiment was carried out on the largest scale 23 years ago. Mr. M'Kenzie Wallace, in his remarkable book, noticed that 20 years after the emancipation of the serfs and the purchase of their lands by the State the amount of arrears due by them to the State was infinitesimal. If people, like the serfs, who, from their previous condition, knew extremely little about commercial transactions, thus kept their faith with the State, why should they be apprehensive that the Irish would act otherwise? He had, however, the fullest confidence that if the Government would accept the proposal in the present Bill on this subject, and then carry out a comprehensive scheme of purchase on the part of the tenants, the result would be a large influx of purchasers, whose advent would be advantageous not only to the tenants and the country generally, but to the landlords themselves. There was another danger to which he should wish to direct the attention of the House, and that was the possibility that the unhappy history of the Encumbered Estates Court was about to be repeated. Bad as the owners of encumbered Irish estates were, the purchasers of those estates were far worse, and they were the cause of the untold miseries which had been inflicted upon the Irish people. Events were tending more and more in the same direction, and unless something were done to extend and enlarge the operation of the Purchase Clauses of the Irish Land Act, a repetition of the miseries which had been caused by the establishment of the Encumbered Estates Court would be inevitable, and Ireland would be handed over to land-jobbers. He trusted, therefore, that he had said sufficient to induce the Government to support any fair proposal for the extension of the Purchase Clauses of the Act of 1881. In touching upon these four points he believed that he had dealt with the leading features of the present measure. There were, however, two or three minor matters with which the Bill proposed to deal to which he should wish to refer. One of those minor matters was the proposal to bring within the operation of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act the holdings within the town parks. He confessed that he could never understand upon what principle of justice the holdings in the town parks of Ireland had been excluded from the operation of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act, because, in his view, there were special reasons why those holdings ought to have been included. The lands adjacent to the Irish towns required a more minute kind of cultivation, a larger and more continuous supply of labour, and a greater expenditure of capital, than that of the farms demanded. There was a large mass of evidence to show that the tenants of this class of holdings, who formed one of the most deserving classes in Ireland, had suffered great hardships from the exaction of increased rentals, which amounted practically to a confiscation of their property. To omit from the Bill this class of tenants would be to do injustice to a most deserving portion of the working population of Ireland. The last two clauses of the Bill related to turbary and the right of way. With regard to turbary, it had been found that in many instances landlords had been able to neutralize the reduction of rent under the Land Act by raising the charge for turbary; and as the tenant was obliged to obtain fuel, he was compelled to pay the charge for turbary which the landlord demanded. The clause in the Bill relating to this matter limited the tenant's right to cut turf to his household necessities, and did not entitle him to extend his right for purposes of trade. The question of the tenant's right to access to his holding stood in a somewhat similar position, and was dealt with by Clause 16. That right of way ought to be secured to him on the payment of a moderate charge; and the landlord ought not, by means of exacting a high charge for access to his holding, to be allowed to render nugatory the provisions of the Land Act. He asked the House not to be influenced by the imperfect manner in which the Bill had been drawn, but to judge it on its own merits, and to replace the Land Act on those principles of justice on which it had been originally based by the Prime Minister. He believed that the adoption of this measure would bring about an end of the agrarian movement in Ireland. [Mr. Trevelyan dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be somewhat sceptical upon that point; but he believed that such would be the case. With the end of that agitation there would come about the beginning of a better state of things, and he hoped they would see a self-governed country anxious to secure the interests of a great and consolidated Empire. He begged, in conclusion, to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Barry.*)

Mr. BRODRICK said, that, in the interesting and ingenious speech to which the House had just listened, the hon. Member had endeavoured to persuade them that this measure was identical in principle with, and followed closely the lines of, the Irish Land Act.

That, doubtless, was a legitimate thing for the hon. Member to do; and, doubtless, if hon. Members had not in their immediate recollection the exact provisions of the Land Act, they might be led to believe that this measure was merely an extension of the principles of that Act. He believed, however, that those hon. Members who had supported the principles of the Land Act, and who desired to see the temporary settlement that had been arrived at maintained, would join him in opposing this Bill. The principles of this measure were not now for the first time brought under the notice of the House. A measure similar in character, and almost identical with this in its main provisions, was brought before the House last year, when it was discussed at considerable length, was commented upon by the Prime Minister in a speech of unusual acumen and force, and was rejected by an overwhelming majority on a Division. In these circumstances the House would probably be inclined to ask what were the circumstances which had caused the measure to be re-introduced in an almost identical form with that which had been rejected last year. In fact, if there were any difference in form between the two measures this was the worse measure of the two. If the present measure were carried, it would have the effect of entirely upsetting the settlement that had been come to under the Land Act. He thought that he was entitled to ask the House whether they believed that this measure, put forward from the quarter from which it had come, was entitled to be regarded as a loyal attempt to extend the provisions of the Land Act? In February, 1882, the Prime Minister had said that while the Land Act was working well in the direction of restoring social order and contentment the Irish Members were working in a direction which, although it might seem to them legitimate, he considered to be antagonistic to the operation of that Act. What were the principles of this measure, and how did they not correspond with those of the Land Act? The provisions of the Land Act gave an almost complete authority to the Land Commissioners to lay down the principles upon which the judicial rents were to be fixed, inasmuch as they were to consider the circumstances connected with each holding. This measure proposed to alter those provisions by making a change in the principle upon which judicial rents should be fixed, and by declaring that when the next fixing of judicial rents should take place the Commissioners should be absolutely bound by the present rent as the maximum. The remarks of the hon. Member as to the fixing of the judicial rents were calculated to mislead the House. The controversy was as to whether a judicial rent should take effect from the date of the application to the Court, or from that of the judgment of the Court fixing the rent. The hon. Member stated that the fixing of the rent by the Court would not cause the rent to be paid as a judicial rent in the case of an appeal being made. In that opinion, however, he believed the hon. Member was absolutely wrong. What were the facts of the case? Last year the Prime Minister stated that 90,000 applications had been made to the Court, that 30,000 of those applications had been already dealt with, and that the remainder were being dealt with at the rate of 100 a day. It appeared that more than half of those arrears of cases had been worked off within 11 months. He did not know to what date the statistics quoted by the hon. Member extended. [Mr. BARRY: To the month of August in last year.] Well, since then a large number of cases had been disposed of, which the hon. Gentleman represented to be still before the Court. Since last August the Court had been dealing with cases at the rate of 100 a day. When they were asked to form a judgment on figures so absolutely delusive as those given by the hon. Member, the House had a right to ask that they should see clearly what was the real state of the case. If he had any fault to find with this part of the Act, it was that, as he believed, the fixing of judicial rents was made by the Government not a matter of accuracy, but a matter of pace. From the first everything had been done to force the Sub-Commissioners to quicken their movements. At the time when valuers were appointed the right hon. Gentleman opposite used words which were interpreted to mean that if they did not perform their duties with sufficient celerity the system would have to be reconsidered, and they would have to be removed. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had explained that language; but, at the same time, there could be no question that the Government had been in the habit of putting a spur behind the Sub-Commissioners whenever they had an opportunity. Last year the right hon. Gentleman vaunted that the daily rate of dealing with applications was at first 14, then 40, then 76, and afterwards 100. This boast was little calculated to convey a belief in the justice of the decisions to the minds of those who were principally concerned. But, whatever might have been the effect on their minds, the celerity of the decisions had cut away the whole of the case of the hon. Gentleman, inasmuch as the amount of arrears was nothing now compared with what it had been. In point of fact, the number of cases waiting in each district had been reduced by two-thirds since this time last year. There was another matter which had been brought before them with amusing reserve. It was that the judicial rent of a tenant's ex-statutory term was not to be more than the maximum of the rent of his statutory term, except in respect of any improvement actually made by the landlord. What, then, was to be done? The settlement of 1881 was arrived at when prices were very low; and the hon. Member asked the House to affirm that, although there might be a general rise in prices, or a town might grow up near the farm, or a railway might run through the middle of it, and thus the farm might become accommodation land of very great value, but rent must not be increased.

Mr. BARRY said, he thought the hon. Gentleman could not have read the clause. It made a distinct provision under which the rent might be raised in case the holding had, independently of the tenant, permanently increased in value.

Mr. BRODRICK said, he maintained his contention that unless the particular holding was included in the value, so that larger crops could be grown from it, no increase could be made in the rent. If the clause were adopted he should be sorry to have to argue before the Sub-Commissioners that a general rise in values had increased the value of the farm. As the hon. Member appeared to attach so much importance to this clause, he ought not to have passed it over as being one of the three "minor clauses." He turned, however, from that point to the great question of the improvements. The hon. Member's proposal was to permit open robbery of what was acknowledged by the Act of 1881 to be the interest and property of the landlord. It was proposed that the tenant should get the full value of improvements without regard to the length of time he might have enjoyed them. According to the hon. Gentleman's contention, it would be perfectly reasonable to allow nothing whatever for wear and tear of the improvements, and for the degeneracy of those improvements. Secondly, the hon. Member proposed that the landlord should have no power of enforcing any contract by which improvements were to be made his own. Thirdly, the hon. Member would transfer from the landlord to the tenant the assumption as to who had effected improvements; and, lastly, he treated the tenant and his predecessors in title in precisely the same fashion as predecessors in occupancy, although they might have had no title whatever to the land. The effect of these four provisions would be to reduce the landlord's interest in the land to the precise position in which it was at the time of the Deluge. In fact, these provisions were absolutely prohibitive of any expenditure of money by the landlord. Well, he would only point to the enormous increase which had taken place in some counties in the amount of the tenant's interest in consequence of the Act of 1881. This was so remarkable that it had become evident to every sane man in the country that the tenants had received not only all that was theirs, but also a large slice of their landlords' property. He might mention the case of an estate in the county of Clare, where it had not been customary for large sums to be given for tenant right before the passing of the Act. The landlord had not only executed the greater number of the permanent improvements, but had actually built houses of considerable value all over his estate. When the Sub-Commissioners came to assess the rental on that estate they said—

> "Although these houses were built in pursuance of a contract with the tenant, and although the landlord has charged a sum not exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on his outlay, we cannot take account of that in valuing the land."

They could take 15 acres of land, and if it was worth 6*s.* or 8*s.* per acre they could give that price, but no more; although, of course, an outlay of £150, at 2½ per cent, would justify an addition of £3 15*s.* to the rent. They, therefore, deliberately declared that it would be impossible to take those improvements by the landlord into account, and they expressed their regret at being driven to that opinion. He believed that regret was perfectly genuine, because the Sub-Commissioners felt that in thus acting they were impeding the much-desired amelioration of the dwellings of the poorer classes in Ireland, and also that they were putting an insuperable obstacle in the way of any landlord who desired to improve his property. [An hon. MEMBER: What is the name of the estate?] Lord Leconfield's, in County Clare. On that estate there had been sales of tenancies in the course of the past 18 months. The sales of these tenancies had averaged 20½ years', and in one case 45 years' purchase. The facts seemed to be that in a case like this the Sub-Commissioners said they could not put value on the land if these men were ready to give 20½ years' rent in order to obtain possession of the farm. Was it not, therefore, a fair deduction from that fact alone to say that where a man was voluntarily raising his own rent double, and sometimes more than double, by giving as much as 45 years' purchase for the farm, that he had not only bought all his own improvements, but also his landlord's improvements? He would further say that in many cases, through the operation of this Act, jointly with the operation of the Arrears Act, a tenant had committed a gross fraud upon the estate. He would take an instance from the letter of Mr. Hussey, one of the best known land agents in the South of Ireland. That gentleman mentioned the case of one of Sir George Colthurst's tenants, whose rent was £48, the Poor Law valuation £45, and who sold his interest for £630, or, with auctioneer's fee, £661 10*s.* Last year this same tenant, under the Arrears Act, applied for a year's rent upon the estate. In order to do that he was obliged to swear what his available assets were, and he put them down at £104 10*s.*, and according to the form for that purpose he was bound to include the selling of the farm. That man, who received a year's rent from the State to enable him to pay his way, had just realized from the incoming tenant £661 10*s.* He would also call the attention of the House to the fact that a tenant who considered £48 too high a rent was succeeded by another who thought £71 not too much to give. They had been told that the effect of the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" had been to effectually destroy the interest of the tenant in these improvements. The House had not had a particle of evidence placed before it to bear out that assertion. The only instance mentioned was 12 months old, in which a fair rent notice had actually been served; but there was no evidence to show that with that fair rent the tenant would not sell his improvements for an enormous sum. With regard to the presumption of title by the tenant, all he could say was, why stop short there? If they were giving presumption to a tenant in respect of improvements, whether he had a predecessor in title or not, why not go a step further and say that the landlord, before he engaged a tenant, must make his title clear to the land? There was another very strong argument against this clause. They were told that it had been done in pursuance of contract; but if the improvements had been executed in pursuance of contract, still the landlord was not to have the benefit. What would be the effect of that clause? The literal effect would be that at the close of any building lease which might have been given, its main provision would be invalidated. He undertook to say that this clause was not only prejudicial to the lease-owning classes in Ireland, but against the whole tenure of land and house property in this country. It would be a complete subversion of the principle of property in this country, and he would decline to discuss it, because it was absolutely foreign to the principles on which legislation on this subject had proceeded in this country. The next point was that in regard to leaseholders. The hon. Gentleman had stated that they constituted the most rack-rented body of farmers in Ireland. He also said that no suspicion of freedom of contract could have entered into the arrangement between the leaseholders and the landlord. That statement was not only not the fact, but it was the direct reverse of the fact. The House must be aware that the great majority of leaseholders in Ireland took their leases after the Act of 1870. ["No, no!"] Well, a great number of them. Those leases were given at a time when, as the hon. Member would persuade the House, the system was in vogue that when a proposed rise of rent in a good year had taken effect, the tenant would only have to claim compensation for disturbance and leave his farm with a large sum of money in his pocket. The House would therefore see the position of a man who deliberately took a lease, and was essentially in the position of a man protected in his freedom of contract by Act of Parliament. He could not conceive that the House would interfere with leases which were taken almost under a Parliamentary title. The hon. Member quoted a statement made by the Prime Minister, that as regarded the leaseholders in 1882, the question of altering leases was distinctly considered by the Government, and that, in their judgment, they would not be warranted in asking the House to interfere with leases in regard to land. On the 14th of March of last year the right hon. Gentleman also said that the Government, after long consideration, had decided not to attempt to deal with the matter of leases unless in certain special and exceptional cases. The Prime Minister added that he was inclined to admit that there were certain cases with regard to which exceptions ought to be considered, and might be considered with advantage, while not in the least degree departing from the principle of the Act, but merely giving clearer and fuller effect to it. What were the main facts of the Bill with respect to which the hon. Gentleman had addressed the House? There was in the Bill an animus exceedingly distasteful to the House. It was not merely the fact that what the Prime Minister called the main provisions of the Act of 1881 were to be reconsidered, but all the securities, small as they were, and little as they had been beneficial to the landlord since they had been inserted, were to be taken away. Then, with respect to the question of town parks. The town parks represented accommodation land which varied greatly in value from year to year. It would be as unjust to the tenant as to the landlord to fix the value at a recognized figure. Considering also the proximity of the land to the town, the value of building property, and the value of accommodation land, it would be, he thought, most injurious and unjust to re-open that question in a sense opposed to the landlord. These questions, like turbary and right of way, had been gratuitously introduced into the Bill without any necessity arising from the transgression of tenants' rights by landlords. An attempt was also made to simplify the sale of tenancies, which was already so simple that enormously increased prices had been received for them, and the simplification was to be effected by the omission of notice to the landlord when a sale was effected. It was absurd to suppose that such notice was any check on the sale of tenancies. Generally speaking, the Bill was opposed in principle to the Act of 1881. Now, it was no new fact that all the predictions which had been made of the Act of 1881 had been falsified. It had been said that rents, for the most part, would not be disturbed. In 99 cases out of 100 they had been disturbed by the Sub-Commissioners, whom it was not originally intended to appoint as arbitrators between landlord and tenant. There had even been cases where the valuers on both sides, and even in individual Sub-Commissioners themselves before their appointment, had recommended an increase of rent which the Chief Commissioners had not seen their way to authorize. They were also assured by Lord Carlingford that the great estates in the country would not be affected; but in the result the great estates had suffered as much as the smaller. Again, they were told that the selling value of land would not be diminished; and the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had gone the length of saying that to compensate the landlords would be to compensate them for a benefit conferred upon them, and that new purchasers would be brought into the market. But what were the facts? In 1876, the sales amounted to £1,175,000, and the average price realized was 22½ years' purchase. In 1882, the amount received on sales was only one-fifth of that sum, only 146,000 acres were sold, and the average price realized was only 17½ years' purchase. Between 1876 and 1881, in the Province of Munster the value of estates sold had gone down from 21 to 14 years' purchase. Thus, the prophecy of the right hon. Member for Bradford was not only not fulfilled, but the result had been a gigantic depreciation in the value of land. Moreover, the Fair Rent Clauses of the Act of 1881 had entirely prevented any operation of the Purchase Clauses. The true state of the case had been revealed by a Cabinet Minister in one of those inconvenient accesses of frankness which sometimes occurred. On January 16, 1884, the President of the Board of Trade spoke of tens of thousands of men, fathers of families, and tillers of the soil, who a few years ago were without motive for exertion, but were now practically owners of the land which they cultivated. Those men were then, it would seem, no longer mere occupiers, and after that testimony he need not enlarge upon the point as to whether this Bill would legitimately extend the operation of the Act of 1881. He had always understood that the House of Commons was agreed that the three things really wanted in Ireland were an increase in the number of owners of land, an improved class of tenants, and emigration from the starving districts where people could not gain a living from the soil. The Bill would do nothing to aid any of those objects, and its only end was to take another slice of the landlord's cucumber. It would tend to increase the number of the least desirable class of tenants. The purchase question was a large one, and ought not to be dealt with in a Bill of that character, the only effect of which would be to take another instalment from what the landlord had to sell. Such a question ought not to be left to people who deliberately opposed the efforts of those philanthropists who were endeavouring by emigration to find better homes for those who wished to emigrate, and who only desired to fix men on farms which could not support them in order to continue the agitation which they had promoted. Those Gentlemen only desired a purchase system on the condition that the occupier should have hardly anything to buy, and the owner hardly anything to sell. The Government ought firmly to resist such attempts, and procure a period of rest from fresh so-called remedial measures of that character. They ought to control their utterances, and as far as they could the utterances of their supporters. If they did so, something like a settlement, something like stability might be brought about. But if they did not adopt that course, it could not be said that the agitation proceeded from the exactions of landlords, which could no longer be perpetrated, nor from the internecine hatred of hon. Members below the Gangway, but from the encouragement constantly given by the Government to the introduction of measures of that character which disturbed the stability of the country, and from a state of affairs against which he and others had all along protested.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, no matter what difference of opinion might exist in the House on the matter under discussion, no fault could be found with the very moderate speech in which the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry) had introduced the Bill, nor with the equally moderate and able speech with which its rejection was moved by the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). He (Mr. T. A. Dickson) meant to confine himself principally to two points—first, as to leaseholders; and, secondly, as to the expansion of the Purchase Clauses. The Prime Minister had in several speeches referred to the leaseholders and their grievances, and promised, under certain circumstances, to deal with them. It would be very desirable for some Member of the Government to announce what their intentions were, in order that the leaseholders in Ireland might know where they stood; for, undoubtedly, whether rightly or wrongly, the leaseholders had the idea that the Prime Minister was willing to legislate on their behalf. No class of tenant farmers in Ireland was more deserving of relief. They had been in the past, and still were, the most thrifty class. They were the tenants who had improved their lands, who had built, fenced, and drained, when other tenants were indolent and idle. By so doing they had placed themselves in such a position that they were at the mercy of the landlord. Since 1870, as well as prior to that year, they had been compelled to take leases, and pay whatever rent the landlord chose to impose. The hon. Member for West Surrey had spoken of freedom of contract; but before the

Act of 1870 no freedom of contract really existed in Ireland. The tenants had to accept leases on the landlord's terms or surrender all. This injustice had come to be admitted by many landlords, especially in the North of Ireland. Already the Drapers' Company of London, who owned a large estate, had taken a surrender of all their leases. This example had been followed by Sir William Cunningham, their agent. The father of the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson) had accepted the surrender of the leases of his tenants, and many other landlords in the South of Ireland had been equally generous. Why should the very cream of the tenants of Ireland, as the leaseholders were, be excepted from the benefits of the Land Act? Clearly, they must be brought within its scope sooner or later, and the sooner the better. The noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), in a speech in the House two years ago, said—

> "He had never been able to see that there was anything in a lease which necessarily took it out of the purview of the law. . . . It was natural that that should cause dissatisfaction among leaseholders, and that they should complain of having been dealt with differently from others, and he thought they should be placed on an equal footing."—(3 *Hansard*, [268] 1517-18.)

The noble Lord correctly expressed the idea which prevailed in Ireland. As to the Purchase Clauses, they originated in 1868, when the "Bright Clauses" were introduced into the Church Temporalities Act. They had now been in operation for 16 years, and no difference of opinion existed on this point, that they were a failure, and, although patched up in 1870 and in 1881, they were simply a dead letter as far as any practical results were concerned. It was satisfactory to know that the Government were now prepared to deal with the Purchase Clauses, and he hoped they would be so expanded and amended that they would become equally beneficial to landlord and tenant. During the past year or two the question of the Purchase Clauses had almost ceased to be a tenant's, and had became principally a landlord's question. In the present condition of affairs the landlords were as much, if not more, interested in the question of the extension of these clauses than the tenant farmers. A proof of this was afforded last year, when the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) moved his Resolution on this subject, which was passed unanimously. There could be no permanent settlement of the Irish Land Question until these clauses were amended and expanded, so that under them an occupying proprietary might be created, and he believed that this could only be obtained by the prompt intervention of the State. They found themselves to-day face to face with the same state of affairs that they had in 1850, when the Encumbered Estates Court came into operation. The landlords' estates were again heavily encumbered. Last week, according to a Dublin newspaper, there was put up for sale in the Land Court a property in the county of Westmeath, bringing in a rental of £365, and the Judge said he could not sell at £5,500 a property for which a few years ago the landlord paid £10,600. In the very same county a tenancy was put up comprising 7½ acres, with a thatched dwelling, on which a judicial rent had been fixed, and it sold for £330. A good deal of interest was taken in that sale, as it was looked upon as a test of the value of the Land Act; and, no doubt, from the tenants' point of view, the result was very satisfactory, for the tenant right sold for a fair price. As they were now in the same position as in 1850, he would ask the Government if they were prepared to allow the same fatal blunder to be made? There was a splendid opportunity in 1850 of having a peasant proprietary created all over Ireland, if facilities had been given to the tenants on the great estates for the purchase of their holdings. That opportunity was missed, speculators and jobbers rushed into the market and bought, at ruinously low prices, property which should have been passed to the tenants. The result of the change of ownership from landlords to small speculators and jobbers was disastrous to the tenants, because under it they were exposed to the very worst system of rack-renting and oppression. Not far from where he lived, in Ulster, a speculator, in 1854, bought an estate, the rent of which was £180. When the Land Commissioners came to declare a fair rent, the Sub-Commissioners found that this rent had been increased to £430, and they reduced it to £230; but even then it yielded the owner more than 6 per cent on his original purchase.

That was only one of many instances which might be adduced of the evils brought by the breaking up of large estates and their passing into the hands of speculators instead of tenants. The Government alone could say whether these evils should continue to be perpetuated, or whether the tenants should have every facility for becoming the owners of their holdings. He would follow the example of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry), by quoting some figures. From April 1, 1882, to April 1, 1883, under the operations of these clauses, 95 tenants only became owners, at the cost of £46,000; and since the passing of the Land Act in 1881 the total number of sales to tenants was only 330, representing 15,000 acres, with a rental of £11,500. Such results from an Act, which a large staff had been provided to carry out, had disappointed Ireland, as well as the Members of that House. Why had the Act failed? He thought there were three reasons. The first was the hard-and-fast lines drawn in the Bill, and the main cause of failure was that the Act prescribed that one-fourth of the purchase money must be advanced by the tenant, and three-fourths by the Land Commission. The second difficulty was that the rate of repayment and of interest could in no case be varied by the Land Commission. The third was that before a landlord could sell his estate three-fourths of the whole number of tenants must agree, representing two-thirds of the rent. The result had been that owing to these difficulties, as the last Report of the Land Commission showed, up to August 31, 1883, advances of £225,000 to the tenants to buy their holdings having been sanctioned by the Land Commission, only half the number who applied were able to complete the transaction, owing to the difficulty of complying with the rules. He recommended that some authority should be created which should be free from all these restrictions, and be empowered to settle between landlord and tenant on a sound commercial basis. He knew that many English Members objected to the advance of the whole of the purchase money; but he maintained that by doing so the State would run little, if any, risk. Irishmen found it difficult to make Englishmen understand this point about the Irish Land Question—that the tenant had almost an equal interest in the land with his landlord. If they insisted upon the tenant paying a large part of the purchase money, they impoverished him, so that he could not cultivate the ground properly, or they sent him to the money-lender, from whom he had to borrow money at an exorbitant rate of interest, He knew cases of tenants who purchased under the Church Temporalities Act, and, taking into account the law charges and the rate at which they had to borrow one-fourth of the purchase money, the interest and costs upon one-fourth came to more than the three-fourths advanced by the State. Whatever the Government would do, he should urge for their advancing the whole of the purchase money, the repayment to be spread over a period of at least 42 years at 4½ per cent. The result would be that a tenant with a fixed judicial rent of £20, buying at say 20 years' purchase, would have £400 to pay. His charge in future would be £18, leaving a margin of £2 for poor rate and other charges, now partly borne by the landlord. In cases where the whole money was advanced, of course the Government should have the entire security—namely, the fee-simple of the land and the tenant right. Whatever authority might be created to deal with these clauses must be free to deal with every case solely and entirely on its own merits, unhindered by restrictions which had proved so disastrous in the past. Then came the question, what authority should put into operation the Purchase Clauses when amended? It was quite hopeless to expect the Land Commission to do this. Their hands were more than full. They now had 8,000 appeals to deal with, and they were only able to accomplish 300 a-month, so that they had quite three years' hard work before them. If the question of the Purchase Clauses was to be satisfactorily solved, it must be by the creation of a new authority, which he would designate the Irish Land Bank. There was no existing local authority that would answer the purpose. The Grand Juries were on the eve of being abolished. The Poor Law Guardians were too small a body in each district. In the debate last year on the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) the Prime Minister said—

> "My impression is, that these clauses will have to be revised; that the revision, if it is to

be made, ought to be of a serious character; and if it is to be of a serious character, it would be impossible to effect it, except with the introduction of a local authority."—(3 *Hansard*, [280] 450.)

He (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had no doubt that when the Premier used these words he had in view his great scheme for the establishment of Local Government in Ireland on a comprehensive basis. But that scheme seemed to be as far off as ever. There was no local authority in existence which could possibly undertake such a responsibility, and this question of land purchase and transfer could not wait. The question of Local Government of Ireland he believed was, at any rate, two or three years ahead. Then, why not deal at once with the Purchase Clauses in a broad and comprehensive spirit? There existed amongst Irish Members an almost perfect unanimity of opinion on this subject, and the prompt settlement would be equally beneficial to landlords and tenants. He did not despair of seeing a system of Local Government established in Ireland; and, when accomplished, what was to prevent every county and every province taking over its own responsibility in connection with advances to tenants and the repayment of interest? The Government should prepare the way for a local authority, for when they had an occupying proprietary created in Ireland they would have laid the foundation for Local Government on a safe and sound basis. He believed great exaggeration prevailed in English minds as to the amount of money required for putting the tenants in possession of their holdings. In the debate last year £300,000,000 was mentioned as likely to be necessary. He had consulted a number of practical men in Ireland, and their opinion was that not more than £1,000,000 or £1,500,000 could be expended prudently in any one year in bringing about this transfer. On the day the House met he gave Notice of a Bill confined to the one subject of amending and expanding the Purchase Clauses. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a day or two afterwards, in answer to a Question, stated that the Government would announce their intentions on the second reading of his (Mr. T. A. Dickson's) Bill; but he was glad they had changed their minds. It was satisfactory to know that after Easter they would be prepared to deal with this question, and take it into their own hands. If the Government should fail to produce a satisfactory measure it would not be for want of suggestions coming from all quarters. Public opinion was ripe for a settlement. It was a matter of vital interest to Ireland, and when 81 Members of that House were agreed on this question, it was time that the Government should take it into serious consideration, and deal with it in a broad and comprehensive spirit. In conclusion, he must express his strong conviction that if the Government were to settle this question, the only way in which it could be satisfactorily settled was through the intervention of a financial institution established in Ireland under the guarantee of the State. It should be created upon no narrow lines, but upon lines so drawn as to be able to accomplish thoroughly the object they all had in view, and such lines as would ultimately lay the foundation for bringing in under this institution many questions relating to land, and to advances for land improvement, which were now dealt with by the Board of Works. He hoped, when the Government came to make their statement, Irish Members would not be disappointed in the hopes they now entertained.

Colonel NOLAN said, that while he supported the entire Bill he should confine his remarks to the question of purchase. He did not believe that the present system could continue to be worked. It stopped everything, and no progress was possible under it. The way to get out of the present difficulty was for the Government to do everything in their power to establish a peasant proprietorship in Ireland; and whether they adopted the scheme of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), or whether the work was done more directly by the Government, it was the only way in which peace and tranquillity could be obtained in Ireland. If the proposition of this Bill to extend the time for the repayment of advances from 35 to 52 years was adopted, and the annual payment was thus reduced, say from £5 to £3 10*s*., they would at once have a great rush of purchasers. At the same time, he agreed with the hon. Member for Tyrone in thinking that the State would not be put to a great expense by advancing the whole of the purchase money. The cost would not exceed £30,000,000 in 20 years; and the possible loss on the transaction would not exceed £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 in 20 or 30 years. But he believed there would be no money lost, and the obvious advantages were great, to say nothing of the increased revenues that would be realized from indirect taxation. If it was suggested that there would be a practical difficulty in collecting the money that would be due periodically to the State, he thought there would be no such difficulty, for the Income Tax collectors would be glad to make the collection. If the Government undertook the collection of rents which were reduced rents, and which should be determinable in 40 or 50 years, they would incur very much less odium than was at present incurred by the collection of rents by the landlords, the process would be less expensive both to the tenants and to the country, and such a course could not fail to conduce to the tranquillity of the country. There was a large class of landlords in Ireland who did no good whatever to the country, and who spent there none of the money they derived from it. He did not wish to deprive those of their property, but most of them were anxious to sell, and the great body of the tenantry in Ireland were anxious to give them fair terms. He believed that if the Government would adopt the policy which had been recommended to them by over 80 Members of Parliament in the Memorial presented to the Prime Minister there would soon be a complete change in Ireland. One hundred thousand proprietors would then be established on these farms at a trifling cost to the State — perhaps £50,000 or £60,000 a-year for a few years—and no odium would be incurred by the Government which would bear any comparison with the odium excited by the present system of collection by the agents of the landlords.

MR. MOORE said, he gave the Bill a general support, feeling, as everyone must, the supreme necessity of bringing this question to a satisfactory termination now, whilst the state of Ireland was tranquil. The dispute as to the Purchase Clauses was practically at an end, and the only anxiety now was to know what the Government were going to do. But there were two great difficulties in the way of the extension of these clauses which had not yet been placed before the House, and which had nothing to do with the difficulty usually urged—that, namely, of inducing the tenant to change his tenure. A very large number of landowners in Ireland were limited owners, who were compelled to invest a certain part of their incomes in Government Stocks and Securities, and who, under such a scheme as had been put forward, would have to suffer a very great reduction in their rental. Another difficulty consisted in the fact that one-third of the whole land of Ireland was held under middlemen, and no provision had yet been suggested for compelling the superior landlord to sell in case the middleman desired to do so, or *vice versâ.* These were matters with respect to which provision would have to be made. With regard to the question of town parks, he had little difficulty in supporting the provisions of the Bill; because, now that the Courts had settled down to work in a business-like way, it would be better that some sacrifice should be made for the sake of symmetry in a large measure of this sort. He believed it would be wise to throw in the town parks with the other holdings to which the Bill applied. Of course, it was quite evident that there was a great additional value inherent in such property by reason of its proximity to large towns; but he did not see why that could not be fairly estimated by the Sub-Commissioners' Court. The proposition that judicial rents should date from the time of the application to the Court was so inherently just, that, in his opinion, there could be no opposition to it. Then came, perhaps, the most important question of all—the question of leaseholders, which, to his mind, really amounted to this. Had the leaseholders any more freedom of contract at the time they made their leases than yearly tenants had? He was quite certain that in many cases the leaseholders had no freedom whatever, and that in the great majority of cases tenure of land had been so perilous and dangerous to the tenant that for the sake of temporary rescue and security he accepted a lease on terms which he would otherwise have refused. The Government gave relief in two cases—first, where the lease had been forced upon the tenant; and, secondly, where it contained terms in themselves unfair. But it was limited by this provision—that he should only be able to go to a Court if he had been a year to year tenant when he took the lease. In many cases men were forced to take leases, no opportunity being given to them to become year to year tenants, and on this point he would refer to what had happened in two properties —namely, the Perry and the Stradbroke properties. On the Perry property a lease was taken in 1853 at 36*s.*; in 1860 it was raised to 60*s.*, in 1867 to £5, and in 1874 to £6. In 1867 the tenant was served with a notice of ejectment, to oblige him to take out the renewal of the lease; and he (Mr. Moore) believed, though he was not sure, that the same thing was done on another occasion. This man's lease fell out just in time to enable him to take advantage of the Land Act, and the tenant stated before the Court that on the occasion of each one of the renewals he had to pay 50*s.* for expenses. Mr. Reardon, the Sub-Commissioner, stated that it was such cases as these that were the cause of the passing of the Act of 1881. The leases on the property forbade a man to build a house; and he (Mr. Moore) knew a tenant who passed one winter in a house the wall of which was down waiting for the written permission of the landlord to build. Almost all the tenants on the property were excluded from the benefits of the Act. Now, as to the Stradbroke property, it was purchased in 1853 for £103,000, and sold in 1874 to Lord Ashtown for £163,000. This profit of £60,000 was wrung from the increased rents charged for land, which, in the main, was below average value. [Mr. Chaplin: What is the value of the property now?] It was worth now about the same. One-third of the tenants were tenants from year to year, two-thirds were under leases, and of these all but 12 were entirely excluded from the benefits of the Act. Even those 12 tenants had been in great danger by a curious technicality of losing the advantages of the Act, their case being taken from the County Court Judge to Lord O'Hagan, who decided in favour of Lord Ashtown's representatives, that they having purchased for value without notice of the tenants' claims, the leases of the tenants could not be broken. The four Judges of the Appeal Court, however, reversed that decision, and declared that the tenants were entitled to the benefits of the Act in reference to the representatives of Lord Ashtown, and so these tenants obtained some relief, though the bulk of the tenants did not. One of these cases was that of a woman whose lease dated from 1843, when the rent of the holding was £53; in 1857 it was increased to £81, in 1873 to £92, and in 1874 it was attempted to be raised to £103 17*s.* 6*d.* No chance was given to the tenant to become tenant from year to year, and in 1873 he was threatened with ejection if the lease were not renewed. Besides this, the lease contained a provision binding the lessee to "resign all possible claim to improvements under the Act of 1870." The exclusion of leaseholders from the present Bill had this unfortunate effect—that it afforded a means of escape for the very worst landlords. If all the leaseholders were emancipated to-morrow, they would not all get reductions, nor even all come into Court, for many of them held under beneficial terms; but, for the sake of those who were being held to excessive rents and unfair conditions, it was desirable that the law should be altered. He trusted these extensions of the Act would be made, so that the Act might, once for all, be rendered a statesmanlike and comprehensive measure.

Mr. PLUNKET said he had not the least intention of following the hon. Member for Clonmel (Mr. Moore) into the particular cases he had quoted. It was obviously impossible to do so, though it was generally found, when they came to be tested, that there was some very good reason for what had been done. His chief reason for rising was to put a little gentle pressure upon the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to induce him to take part in the debate, and tell the House what the intentions of the Government were, for until they knew them the discussion must necessarily be somewhat of an academic character. As regards that part of the Bill which dealt with the Tenure Clauses, he thought it was impossible for the Government to go back upon the pledges they had given, and distinctly repudiate their previous declarations. As far as the Purchase Clauses went, it was of no use putting forward arguments until they knew the substance of what the Government proposed. The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry), in introducing the Tenure

Clauses of the Bill, spoke in a very popular and friendly manner; but this Bill was really the Bill of last year. It was a caricature of the Act of 1881, and brought out in striking and unpleasant prominence the worst features of that measure. In some respects the clauses were word for word identical with the Bill of last year, and of last year's Bill the Solicitor General for England said they had all heard hon. Members opposite contend that all the landlords were entitled to was the prairie value of the land. In this case the Bill denied everything but prairie value. It proposed that prairie value should be the test of fair rent, and that everything beyond that should be the property of the tenant in occupation. He would therefore ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to state what were the proposals of the Government with respect to the Purchase Clauses. The matter was not now before the House for the first time. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had previously introduced it; and last year a Resolution was carried, on the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), upon this very subject. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) would also repudiate the other parts of the Bill. Anyone who knew Ireland knew this—that, however skilful the proposal to establish a peasant proprietary, it must fail so long as hopes were excited in the peasantry of further advantages to be gained by agitation. He hoped, therefore, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would take the opportunity of declaring not only the intentions of the Government with respect to the purchase, but also with respect to the other clauses of the Bill.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was not indifferent to the call of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) to enter the arena. He was glad to seek, as early in the afternoon as was consistent with the rights of hon. Members, an opportunity to join in the discussion. Everything that related to land was important everywhere, and in Ireland it was enormously more important than anywhere else, because the agricultural interest was quite the dominant interest in that country. In other parts of the country the agricultural interest had been suffering from economic causes; but those causes tended to cure or settle themselves, though the process was sometimes unpleasant enough to landlords. In Ireland the uncertainty and anxiety which now hung over agriculture came in great part from the constant applications made by both parties to the Government for assistance, and for further administrative and legislative changes. He could not give stronger proof of that fact than the Memorial which was presented two or three days ago to the Prime Minister, signed by all, or nearly all, the Irish Members, except the Solicitor General for Ireland and the two right hon. Gentlemen who sat opposite, and who probably abstained from putting their names to it on account of their former official position. Under these circumstances, it was the first duty of the Government to inform the mind of everyone concerned, both landlords and tenants, would-be vendor and possible purchaser, as to the intentions which the Government entertained, and to do that in the plainest words. This Bill, which raised in the House every question relating to the Land Act that had been raised outside it, with the solitary exception of the question of appeals, afforded the opportunity of doing what, as he had stated, he conceived to be the absolute duty of the Government. These questions were grave in the highest degree, and the able and agreeable treatment of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Barry) did not rob them of their gravity. Perhaps the gravest of them were those which related to improvements. By Clause 5 it was proposed to enact that where a tenant had made any outlay leading to an increase of value in the land, the whole of such increase of value should be deemed his property. In other words, an improvement was not to mean a work done, but the improvability of land as developed by a work done. The clause was quite clear. It was drawn by a hand that well knew what it was about, and by a rigid rule, which no Court of Law might mitigate or modify, it handed over the improvable qualities of the land from the landlord to the tenant. On this point he wished to read to the House an extract from the works of the late Mr. Isaac Butt. In his book on the Land Act, 1870, at page 128, he said, with respect to this very proposal—

> "A little reflection will show that such a mode of estimation would be unjust. The additional value is not the creation solely of the tenant. It is the creation partly of the expenditure and skill of the tenant, and partly of the inherent capabilities of the soil. It so happens that those inherent capabilities, when undeveloped, do not always enter into the calculation of the letting value of the land, as will be at once understood from the fact that it has frequently happened that land valued at 2*s*. an acre has been, by a trifling expenditure, made worth as many pounds. There are instances not uncommon in which the reclamation of bog or land on the edge of moors or lakes has repaid the whole expenses of the process in the crops which were raised in the course of it. In instances like these, the property is not created by the expenditure of the tenant, but by the latent powers of the soil. Those powers are the property of the landlord, and he has a right to have them returned to him when the tenant's interest expires. He has not a right in morals or in justice to appropriate to himself the expenditure which the tenant has incurred in making them productive."

The principles laid down by Mr. Butt, he maintained, were exactly carried out by the Land Act. This clause went straight in the teeth of this sound view. When this formidable virtue was given to tenants' improvements it became vital to define what these improvements were. And here the Bill spoke very plainly. At present, under five sets of circumstances, the presumption was that the improvement was made by the landlord. One of those sets of circumstances was where the improvements were made before 1850. Clause 6 of this Bill swept away these sets of circumstances, and enacted that the presumption should be that all improvements were made by the tenant or his predecessors. That was to say, to the beginning of time, as to the end of time, all the improvable qualities of the land were presumed to be the possession of the tenant. This, again, made it important to see what constituted a predecessor; and Clause 8 enacted that a predecessor should be a predecessor in occupancy; and the combined effect of the three clauses would be, as the Solicitor General for England declared last year, to confiscate almost all the property of the landlords of Ireland, or to render their tenure of it so insecure that their financial position would be to them, at best, a source of constant anxiety. One effect of passing these clauses would be to invalidate the immense operations which the Land Courts had been engaged in for some 30 months past. The decision of the Courts had been given on the theory of improvements contained in the Land Act of 1881, and those decisions governed not only the cases where they had been made, but indirectly regulated the arrangements made outside the Court, which affected the great majority of the holdings in Ireland. But as soon as these clauses became law, all the tenants who had not hitherto come into Court would apply, for the purpose, not of getting a fair rent, but of getting rid of nearly all rent whatever. The first element in a land settlement, whether made in India, in Germany, or in Ireland, was permanence. Without that it would not be a settlement at all. In 1881 a settlement was made which was coming into operation steadily, largely, and, as they believed, justly; and the Government could not consent even to entertain the notion of upsetting that settlement in 1884 in a manner that would disquiet every owner of property, and probably utterly ruin the greater portion. Now, the other parts of the Bill, though not as sweeping as these clauses, still were very sweeping indeed. Before he left the Improvement Clauses he should like to refer to one sentence in the speech of the hon. Member for Wexford. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill said that there could be no hope of peace in Ireland until the tenants' improvements were their own. He was bound, as a Member of the Government which had passed the Tenants' Improvements Act for England and Scotland, to say that, putting aside all the other immense advantages which the Irish tenants had got in the way of fixity of tenure and of the fixing of a fair rent, the improvements of the Irish tenant were at least as much his own as such improvements were the property of the tenants in England and Scotland. The other clauses of the Bill were not of so serious a character as were the Improvement Clauses; nevertheless, they were by no means unimportant. Clause 2, by its 2nd sub-section, proposed to enact that in case of a sale of tenant right, the landlord's right of pre-emption should cease to exist, and the 3rd sub-section repealed the enactment that the Court, in fixing a judicial rent, should also fix the pre-emption price of the holding. If, indeed, the Improvement Clauses became law, the tenant right would be so very valuable, and the landlord would be so very poor, that there would not be much probability of his exercising his pre-emption; but the conditions securing him the right of pre-emption were fully before the framers of the Act of 1881. They carefully considered them then, and they certainly could not reconsider them in 1884. These were a specimen of the importance of the provisions the Bill contained. But it contained many others, which touched every corner of the question. Clause 9 set aside existing leases, if the tenant thought he could get his rent lowered, giving the landlord no reciprocal right of applying to raise the rent, and striking away even the covenants of leases, as well as giving rise to those grievances which had been described by the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). Clause 1 made the judicial rent count from the gale day after the application to the Court, instead of the gale day after the judgment of the Court; and, pending the judgment, allowed the tenant to pay on Griffith's valuation. Clause 10 admitted middlemen, under certain conditions, to the benefit of the Act. Clause 7 laid down the conditions under which alone, at the end of the first statutory term of 15 years, the rent could be increased. These were the leading proposals of the Bill; they were not matters of detail. They went to upset the main principles of the Land Act, and were intelligible only on the assumption that that Act was wrong in its main principles; and, further, that it was a failure in fact. This the Government could not admit. The grievance of the tenants who applied early in the proceedings of the Land Court was, in the opinion of the Government, a genuine grievance; but the time had passed when any serious benefits could come to the tenants by stirring it up again. The hon. Member for Wexford had justified the opposition of the Irish Members to the Land Bill at the time of its passing on the ground of its shortcomings, and he asked the House to consider the effect of 30,000 cases standing over for decision in the Land Court. That fact, however, was now a thing of the past, because, although there were in March, 1883, 56,000 cases unsettled, there were, at the present time, only 19,000 awaiting decision. At the end of the next six months tenants need have no fear of being kept waiting for their cases to be determined by the Land Court for any appreciable time. The necessity for any alteration of the law in this respect, therefore, was rapidly disappearing; and to make this measure retrospective, and to call upon the landlords to pay back the rent which they had already received, would be most unjust. In his opinion, to interfere with existing contracts with regard to turbary rights and rights of way in Ireland, which concerned not so much the landlords as the tenants, would give rise to actions at law, and to assaults which would seriously increase the trouble of the Executive in maintaining peace and order in the rural districts of the country. An intelligent stranger in the Gallery would think that the House was discussing an Act which had been passed in the interest of the landlord; but what had the Act done for the tenants in Ireland? In the first place, it established in Ulster and gave to the rest of Ireland the right of free sale of tenancies. In the next place, it gave fixity of tenure, subject, of course, to the payment of rent. And, next, but by no means lastly, it gave the tenants the means of having a "fair rent" fixed. Now, on this branch of the subject he must give some figures. Since the passing of the Act up to the 29th of February there had been 111,419 applications to fix fair rents. In 63,789 cases a fair rent had been fixed, and 27,683 cases had been withdrawn or struck out; 19,947 cases remained for decision. In addition to these, there had been 63,073 cases in which agreements had been come to between landlords and tenants, and a "fair rent" agreed upon. Thus, they had the large total of 126,862 cases in which a fair rent had been fixed under the provisions of the Act. Now, as to the previous rental and the present. Of the 126,000 cases, according to the Report of the Land Commissioners, which gave the figures up to the 21st, or practically the end of August, it appeared that in 94,278 cases the former rent had been £1,848,153, and that the judicial rent was £1,496,925, being a reduction of £351,228. Making an estimate of the cases since August, the total former rent would be £2,488,700; judicial rent, £2,014,300; showing a reduction of £474,400, or nearly £500,000 of rent per annum. This, in itself, was a great work; but it was greater still when they looked at these decisions as ruling decisions under which a great number of arrangements had been made that never came into Court at all. The amount of security that had been given to men whose tenure was previously from hand to mouth, the amount of ease that had been given to men whose rents were previously excessive was very great; and, in the opinion of the Government, the Land Act was regarded by the tenants of Ireland with increasing satisfaction and confidence. It had had a marked influence in quieting the disturbed districts. The constant proposals, however, coming from all quarters of the House, and from the Benches behind him, had produced an impression that further and larger changes were in the future. This impression retarded the healing influence of the Act. Moreover—and this was a most important matter—it was certainly one of the leading causes which had produced something like a deadlock in the purchase and the sale of land. A tenant would not purchase his holding and become a proprietor as long as he hoped that by remaining a tenant he might sit at such a very small rent as he would have to pay in many cases if this Bill passed. There was an interesting proof of the effect of certainty of prospect on the sale of land by comparing the sales under the Land Act and under the Church Act, although he allowed that other important considerations here came in. The Church Act was supposed to be final. Out of 8,000 tenants, 6,000 bought their holdings at a cost of nearly £1,700,000. No one was allowed to think that the Land Act was final; and for that reason largely the very favourable terms—much more favourable than the Church Act—had failed to induce the tenants to purchase. Hitherto only a little over 400 tenants had actually bought under the Land Act, at a cost of about £340,000. For the reasons he had given, the Government thought, as they had always thought, it was necessary to speak plainly about the amendment of the Land Act. Two courses were open to them. One would be to introduce a Bill carrying out the very small questions of details in which they thought the Act might be amended. But the objections to this course were that they would re-open the whole question; that they would give occasion to endless controversy; and, what was much more important, that the Amendments which the Government would propose would be regarded as infinitesimal and worthless by the hon. Gentlemen who had brought forward this or any other Bill to amend the Land Act. The Government preferred, therefore, to state that if ever there was a great Act which, in their opinion, was carefully and thoroughly considered, and which it was not expedient to ask Parliament to amend, it was the Land Act of 1881. It was meant for a land settlement of Ireland, and the character of permanency and immutability, so necessary, in their opinion, to a settlement, they intended, as far as in them lay, to give it. He could only repeat the language of the Prime Minister in March, 1883, in which he stated—

> "We have at no time since the passing of the Land Act used any word, or done any acts, which would justify, in any way, anyone in supposing that we were prepared to concur in, or, so far as we are concerned, to allow any disturbance of its fundamental provisions."—(3 *Hansard*, [277] 481.)

That language he could only respectfully repeat to Gentlemen on both sides of the House who desired to change the organic structure of the Land Act. But in one essential particular—and that, however essential, not organic—the Government had not said its last word. The Government had watched with attention the growing opinion that the hopes of making a peasant proprietary in Ireland had fallen short in their fulfilment. His hon. Friends the Members for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), the County of Cork (Mr. W. Shaw), Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), and Donegal (Mr. Lea), who yielded to none in knowledge of Ireland and interest in Ireland, had a Bill on this subject after Easter. The 12th and 13th clauses of that Bill testified to the interest of its promoters in the same question; and he was aware that their feelings upon this subject were shared by those who sat on the Benches immediately opposite. His hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone spoke of the statement which he had made, and hoped the Government would be prepared to state what they intended to do in regard to the Purchase Clauses of the Bill which he was going to bring in. Now, his hon. Friend said the Prime Minister had written a letter to another Member of that House, in which he proposed to anticipate that disclosure by stating that the Government proposals would be made known to the House after Easter. The Bill was to be introduced on the 30th of April; and as that day was after Easter, he could see no inconsistency between his statement and the Prime Minister's letter. The Land Commission, as the Land Act was planned, would, it was hoped, be able to give much of their time to acting as benevolent intermediaries between owners and tenants in facilitating the sale of estates by the one and the purchase of holdings by the other. The result of those fair expectations had hitherto been the purchase of six small estates for a sum of £22,000, and of a rental of some £1,100 a-year. That certainly did not represent a sufficient, or by many degrees a sufficient, advance in the direction in which the Government were very anxious that Ireland should move. The Government had for some time past been applying themselves to this very great and intricate question. It was a very delicate and intricate question, for if they went to work on a false system, or if they once made a concession inconsistent with sound principles of finance, the country might be involved in burdens and difficulties which were very serious to contemplate. [Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Hear, hear!] He was glad to hear that cheer from the noble Lord, who was well aware that if the Government went to work on a false system, and made the smallest concession to any unsound financial doctrine, the country might be involved in great difficulties. He did not intend to give the slightest indication at this moment of what the Government might ultimately propose. It was a fascinating subject, and when one began to discuss it it was almost impossible to avoid a preference for this or that mode of settling the question. The Government would carefully consider all the various proposals which had been made. From this time forward the Irish Government and the Treasury would apply themselves with increased diligence to the work; and he hoped that after Easter the Representative of one or other of those Departments would be able to lay before the House the line in which the Government intended to move, and the extent to which it intended to go. The earnest wish and desire of the Government was to further in any way that was not dangerous to the interests of the Treasury, or to the safe administration of Ireland, the creation of a peasant proprietary. But one essential and preliminary condition was that the minds of those who alone could buy, or, at any rate, who the Government were anxious should buy, should be fully informed as to the permanence of the conditions under which they had been living since the Land Act of 1881; and on that point he had thought it necessary to speak in terms which could leave no doubt in the mind of any single Member of that House.

MR. SEXTON said, that hon. Members of all classes must have derived an interesting lesson from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had told them that by the direct operation of the Land Act reductions of rent amounting to nearly £500,000 a-year had been effected, and added that the probable effect of the indirect operation of the Act, outside the cognizance of the Commissioners, had been as great as the results achieved by them. Thus, in the fore part of his speech, they had the extraordinary admission that the landlords had been plundering the tenants to the extent of £1,000,000 a-year. Wonder had been expressed that the Irish Members should have the temerity to ask the House to consider a Bill which was rejected last year and the year before by considerable majorities. There was no legislative Party in the world more accustomed to be beaten by considerable majorities than was the Irish Party. They had not lost sight of what was the prominent fact in their legislative history—that measures concerning Ireland rejected at one time in that House by considerable majorities had at another time been meekly passed into law by considerable majorities. He had no doubt, notwithstanding the declaration of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland concerning the finality of this question at present, that every clause of the Bill of his hon. Friend would substantially become a part of the law before the conclusion of the first statutory term in Ireland. He could not help observing that while the right hon. Gentleman was, if not boasting to the House, at least appreciating himself on his plain speaking to the House, his Colleague in the Government of Ireland was not only dumb, but was absent. Where, he asked, was the Solicitor General for Ireland? Where was the Gentleman, the sole living proof of the claim of the Whig Party to have an existence in Ireland, who had lately deluded the electors of Derry by promising that if he was elected he would endeavour to have the leaseholders included, and that he would endeavour to obtain the development of the Healy Clause? Of course, they might venture to suggest that his absence, like that of Prince Bismarck, could be explained by the fact that he was suffering from a diplomatic cold. He could not congratulate the Government upon the position to which they had brought themselves upon the Irish agrarian question. While the right hon. Gentleman set before himself the impossible task of endeavouring to convince the tenants of Ireland that finality in regard to the Land Question had been reached, the fact lay broadly before the notice of the House that a supporter of the Government could not obtain a Parliamentary seat in Ireland except by traversing upon the hustings the statements of the right hon. Gentleman. The Government would have to arrive at a unity of mind themselves before hoping that the tenants of Ireland would arrive at the same result. With reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he wished to tell him that when Mr. Isaac Butt, who was now eulogized by the right hon. Gentleman as a moderate Land Reformer, brought forward in the House his proposals for agrarian reform, the Gentleman who then controlled the official affairs in England spoke as plainly to Mr. Butt as the right hon. Gentleman now spoke to the Irish Members. Mr. Butt was told that his proposals could not receive countenance. Mr. Butt had passed away, and the proposals he had made had been carried out to a possibility he had never dreamt of. They had become part of the law of Ireland; and, looking back on the futility of the "No" to Mr. Butt, the Irish Members of to-day valued at very little indeed the plain speaking of the right hon. Gentleman. They had been told that the proposals of the present Bill were radically opposed to the principles and proposals of the Land Act of 1881. He most emphatically questioned that assertion. There was nothing to be found within the circuit of this Bill that was not an endeavour to clear the administration of the principles of the Land Act of 1881 from deleterious vagueness, and to develop those principles to their true and consistent result. The proposal was that the judicial rent should run from the date of the application of the tenant, and not from the date of the judgment of the Court. Observe the reply of the right hon. Gentleman. He said the Court were proceeding now with such speed that there were very few applications left to be dealt with, and that this proposal had now become of slight importance; by withholding this necessary reform for the past two years they had wronged and ruined all the tenants that could be wronged and ruined, and now it was hardly necessary to come to the rescue of the few that were left. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that there were still 20,000 cases to be heard. He (Mr. Sexton) found, upon examining the official records from August to December, that the Commissioners were only overcoming the arrears at the rate of 1,400 a month. At this rate of progress the Commission might still consume 15 months in disposing of the cases before it, and this alongside of the fact that the tenants were obliged to pay the old rack rents. He claimed that they made no strange and no unreasonable proposal in asking the House to extend to the tenant, who was seeking to have a fair rent fixed, the very moderate and very reasonable measure of protection and relief which was accorded to him under the Arrears Act—namely, that pending the fixing of a fair rent proceedings for rent or ejectment should be suspended upon the terms that the tenant, in the meantime, should pay such rent as the Court should fix, not exceeding Griffith's valuation. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had spoken with great plainness on the essential proposal of the Bill, that dealing with improvements. And when the right hon. Gentleman told them that to secure to the tenant full and absolute right in the use and profit arising out of his improvements was to come in conflict with the Land Act of 1881, he invited his attention to the answer given by the Prime Minister in March, 1882, to a question put to him by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). His hon. Friend, in asking the question, drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the "Dunseath" case. The Prime Minister, in reply, said—

> "It is perfectly clear, as correctly stated by the hon. Member, that it was not the intention of the framers of the Act, but directly contrary to their intention, that the interest of the tenant in his improvements, as understood and defined by the Act, should either lapse or be impaired by the enjoyment of them."

When pressed as to whether he would protect the interests of the tenant against the innovations established by the Court of Appeal, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I must remind the hon. Gentleman that our position is not the same now as it was in 1871; that the facilities for transacting Business are very different from what they were then."——(3 *Hansard*, [267] 1663-4.)

The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had stated that the principle put forward by the Irish Members was inconsistent with the construction of the Land Act of 1881. He (Mr. Sexton) told the Government and the House that upon the question of the absolute right of the tenant in his improvements in the soil, unfettered by the theory of improvable capacity, the Irish Members took radical issue with the Government. In doing so they were firmly convinced that they spoke the deliberate and unchangeable mind of the agricultural population of Ireland on this question, and that they were setting out a principle which they believed at no distant date would attain the force of law. What was this theory of the improvable capacity of the soil? Was it for the public interest that such a theory should be maintained? Look back at the past condition of things in Ireland. They need not go so far back as the Deluge, as they had been invited to do by the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). But let them go as far back as Cromwell's time. No one had spoken the truth upon this question more eloquently than the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright). Ever since the days of Cromwell nine-tenths of the improvements on the soil of Ireland had been planted there by the tenant. If the tenant's capital, labour, and skill could now be swept away, the land of Ireland, generally speaking, would be practically as bare of every trace of human industry as the surface of the African desert. A tenant who wished to improve his farm and who borrowed the money from the Board of Works had to repay it at the rate of £6 10*s.* per cent per annum. When he had effected his improvements and the Land Commissioners came to fix his rent, they would, acting under the decision of the Court of Appeal in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," allow him no more than 5 per cent per annum for his improvements. The reward, therefore, for his capital and skill was a loss of £1 10*s.* per cent per annum upon his outlay. If the tenant did not improve the soil the landlord most certainly would not, and this state of the law would naturally prevent a tenant expending money on improving his farm. In Ireland it was supremely important that the capacities of the soil should be developed; yet they were told that the land was to be left in an unimproved condition, because, in deference to the figment of the landlord's interest in the improvability of the soil, the tenant was not to be allowed to benefit by the full improved letting value of the soil due to his own improvements. The tenants of Ireland would demand that the Healy Clause should be interpreted in a rational manner, and not in the warped and fraudulent manner in which it was treated by the Judges who decided the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." And there was one thing very certain—if the tenants in Ireland were not permitted to enjoy the full letting value which they put into the soil, and unless the clause was fairly interpreted, there was a very slender chance of success for any Purchase Clauses. The hon. Member for West Surrey had referred to the present unsaleability of land in Ireland, and had said it was the result of the Land Act. But the unsaleability of land did not proceed from the Land Act. It was the result of the obstinacy of the landlords in refusing fair terms to their tenants, in keeping the crowbar and sheriff so busy, and in thus giving rise to so fierce a movement, that no capitalist would now feel land in Ireland to be a safe investment. If land in Ireland was to be sold at all, it must be sold to the tenant, for it would be bought by no one else. The need of the Irish landlord was greater than that of the tenant. The landlord in most cases had the millstone of a mortgage round his neck, and if he had to struggle along much further he would fall inert and prone. His only hope was in some system of purchase. The tenant, on the other hand, was able to remain in his farm. It would soon become a question of life and death to the landlord to sell. The reductions of rent made by the Land Commissioners had in many cases left the rent still higher than Griffith's valuation, which included every improvement that had been made in and upon the soil, and which was admittedly based on a calculation giving the value of the improvements to the landlord. There was usually an unbroken line of title between the tenant in Ireland and his predecessors in title. The tenants had a right to improvements in the soil which were handed down from father to son upon the holding, even though they were effected before his time. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) would apply his keen intelligence to this point, he would be able to see whether it was likely that the tenants of Ireland, with increasing political power in their own country and in that House, with the certainty of being able to remain in their homes, would join in carrying out a purchase scheme, the basis of which would be a rent which still continued to be fixed upon their own improvements. They never would. The right hon. Gentleman, by his speech that day, had bolted and double-barred the gate to any such solution of the question; and if the landlords of Ireland still hoped to obtain any improvement in their desperate condition, they would have to unsay the words spoken that day, and to admit, as the Solicitor General for Ireland recently did at Derry, that the Land Act was open to amendment and improvement. For his part, he would say in Ireland as he said there that day, that the tenant who knew that his rent was fixed upon his own improvements was no better than an idiot if he consented to become a purchaser upon such manifestly unfair terms as paying for his own improvements. He had already quoted from the speech of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), and he must say also that he had never heard a more fatuous argument than that of the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick)—that the action of the tenants prevented landlords from expending money in the improvement of the soil of Ireland. The hon. Gentleman had yet to learn what the masses of the people had already learned—namely, that the great principle of Irish landlordism in the past had not been to put money in the soil of Ireland, but to take all the money they could out of it, even to the last penny. They were never very willing to invest money in the soil, but were always engaged in trying to dig money out of it to pay their dues. A good deal had been said as to the unfairness of presuming that the improvements had all been made by the tenant. But landlords had agents and bailiffs who kept books, and it would be no difficulty to them to prove what improvements had been made by the landlords. On the other hand, it was a notorious fact that the improvements were nearly in every case made by the tenant, and he, being a poor ignorant man, keeping no books, would naturally find a difficulty in giving legal proof of the improvements he and his predecessors had made. The right hon. Gentleman had given them no arguments on the subject of leases. He merely refused to reopen the subject, although it was notorious that in respect of leases the functions of the Land Act had been nugatory. But there were 100,000 leaseholders in Ireland, holding about one-third of the area of the country and one-half of the value of all the agricultural land, and representing 500,000 people. Was it reasonable to suppose that, while that great body of tenants were excluded from the operation of the Land Act, and suffering from rack-rents while they saw their fellow-tenants going into the Land Court, they would desist from agitation until they were placed on an equality with the other tenants of Ireland? By the tone and matter of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, he was reminded of the Prime Minister's apprehension that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) might have to lead a new crusade in Ireland. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman would be the signal for renewed agitation. The purchase scheme was only the second stage of the Land Question, and it could not be dealt with until the leaseholders were allowed to enter the Land Court on an equal footing with the other tenants of Ireland.

Colonel COLTHURST said, he regretted that the Government had refused to take into consideration the claims of the leaseholders, which was a burning question in the county which he represented (Cork). The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had not attempted to reply to the arguments which had been advanced upon this subject. The leaseholders suffered very great hardships, as they were prevented from any participation in the provisions of the measure, yet there was no doubt that many of these leases had been forced upon them, more particularly since the passing of the Act of 1870. He concurred in the expressions of opinion given by the hon. Members for Clonmel (Mr. Moore) and Sligo (Mr. Sexton) on that subject. There were a large number of tenants in Ireland whom the Land Act had been intended to relieve, who were debarred from its benefits owing to leases which had been forced upon them. Several cases of that sort had come to his knowledge in the County Cork; and, as the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down observed, it would be impossible to suppose that while this source of discontent existed the country would be free from agitation, particularly when they bore in mind the fact that in Munster one tenant in every five was a leaseholder. The refusal of the right hon. Gentleman to make any concessions was, in the case of those who took leases since 1870, especially unjust, as they were really intended to be included within the scope of the Act. He thought it would be only justice to allow all leaseholders to surrender their leases, and apply to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed.

MR. GIBSON said, he had no desire to prevent a Division being taken; but he wished to make a few observations before the debate closed. Everyone must have listened with great attention to the speech of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but there could have been little doubt as to what the right hon. Gentleman would say respecting several of the proposals contained in the Bill. Having regard to the way in which the Prime Minister last year repudiated any consideration, or toleration, or approval of the main proposal of this Bill, no one on the Treasury Bench could have adopted a different line to-day. Reference had been made to the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath." Anyone who was disposed to give the slightest weight to what was said by the hon. Member for County Wexford (Mr. Barry) in reference to the important case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," or to what was said by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in reference to that decision and the Healy Clause, had only to turn to the speech last year of the Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell), and they would see that the hon. and learned Gentleman, who was one of the highest authorities on matters of this kind, had given conclusive reasons showing that the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," on the topics referred to, so far from meriting the extraordinary adjectives applied to it by the hon. Member for Sligo, was one not only legal in the strict sense of the word, but in accordance with the highest principles of justice. No one could deny that there was, at the present moment, in Ireland an absolute deadlock in the Irish land market. The Land Court was practically doing nothing, and the private sales were practically at a standstill. The tenants did not buy, and were not encouraged to buy. They were discouraged to buy in some quarters, in which they might, he thought, receive different advice, and in other quarters from which such advice might not unnaturally be expected. His right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), a man entitled to deal with the question from the tone and habit of his mind, applied himself to it last year, but deferred bringing it under the notice of the House, as he understood it would be taken up by the Prime Minister. Later on his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) brought the subject under the notice of the House, and it was unanimously resolved that it deserved the early attention of Parliament. Therefore, the country had a right to expect that this year the Government would be prepared with some adequate proposal. Bearing in mind, however, the supreme importance and the obvious difficulties of the question, he was not surprised that the Prime Minister should have deferred making any statement upon it until after Easter. They would look forward with hope to what would then be the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman; and he hoped that proposal would indicate that Her Majesty's Government realized the difficulties of the problem, and had a resolute determination to meet them. He confessed he was a little disappointed at the tone of the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo. There was no greater master of speech in the House than the hon. Member, who had the power of presenting shades of meaning and of denunciation which, for his own part, he constantly envied. But the drift of the hon. Member's speech was to discourage the purchase of land in Ireland, and to keep the land market at a deadlock. That was a course which was opposed to the best interests of the country, as well as to all the interests both of landlord and tenant. The speech of the hon. Member was pervaded by this spirit—that it was desirable by legislation to reduce the land to the prairie value, so that then the tenants might come with smiling countenances to the landlord and say—"We will purchase now." It must be evident to all who regarded the question with any degree of impartiality that it was in the last degree undesirable to say anything which would again throw this question into a state of unrest, unsettlement, and agitation. Anyone who desired to advance the cause, not only of good government, but of prosperity in Ireland, must also desire to see the settling down of the public mind in that country; and, therefore, it was obvious that if the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by one single sentence of his speech, had departed from the statements of the Prime Minister and the Solicitor General last year, he would have put himself into the position of supplying motives for a new agitation. Now, he had himself always said that the Land Act ought to be administered, not in the interests of landlord or tenant, but with fair and impartial justice all round; and if they accepted the Act as a settlement, permanent and immutable in its essential conditions, and saw that it should be fairly and impartially administered, they would have done as much as they could reasonably be expected to do for the settling of Ireland at the present time. The debate had been opened by a speech moderate and persuasive in tone, and of considerable ability, but almost exclusively directed to make the House forget the grave, dangerous, and unsettling character of the proposals contained in the Bill. His hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill (Mr. Brodrick), in a speech of great acuteness and force, went into detailed criticisms of all the clauses of the measure; and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland took up its main proposals and reasoned upon them in a way which must have struck everyone for its great force and unanswerable power. The speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), on the other hand, did not go back upon a single one of the proposals contained in the Bill, or meet any one of the objections which had been taken to them. The Bill proposed to abrogate the restrictions upon the right of free sale, and to include not only town parks, but the demesnes of the landlord, let obviously for a temporary purpose, and to alter the date of rent, as if in that respect the Bill had been changed to the prejudice of the tenant in the House of Lords. But the fact was that no change whatever in that respect had been made in the House of Lords. Any change which had been made was made in that House by the Members of the Government in charge of the Bill. As to the Healy Clause, a most inaccurate history was given by the hon. Member for Wexford. An exception was made "where the improvements have been paid for or otherwise compensated by the landlord." The word "otherwise" in that connection was introduced by the late Mr. Law, who, in doing so, said he moved the introduction of the word with the object—

> "That the lowness of the rent paid by the tenant might be taken into consideration in awarding compensation for improvements."

That was the object of the then Attorney General for Ireland, one of the greatest lawyers that ever sat in that House, and whose early death was such a great loss to the country. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), feeling that the ground was cut from under his feet by the introduction of the word "otherwise," moved to add—

> "Provided that the time during which the tenant may have enjoyed the advantage of those improvements may not be held to be compensation within the meaning of the section."

But that proposal was rejected by 262 to 91 votes. It was idle, therefore, to argue that the intention of Parliament was not carried into effect by the Judges.

It was said that the Bill before the House would only make a change in the rent allowed by the lease, and would leave the other conditions unaffected. That was not so. The Bill, if it became law to-morrow, would put it in the power of the tenant not only to sweep away the condition with respect to his rent, but every clause and covenant of the lease at his option. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the last clause of the Bill. He would not go into it; but it was obvious that it would create the greatest possible heart-burning, not only between landlords and tenants, but between the tenants themselves, if it became law. The clause proposed that the tenant of a holding should be given the right of way wherever his convenience required it, not only over the land of his landlord, but over the land of other landlords, and over land held by other tenants, without any regard whatever to their convenience. The Bill, according to its most obvious meaning and intention, would have the most confiscatory effect upon what was left of the property of the landlord, and would also lead to very grave disputes and quarrels between the tenants themselves. For himself, he should look with despair for anything like a settlement of that country being ever arrived at, if any encouragement were given to that measure at the present moment. What was now most wanted in Ireland was that they should encourage the tenants to believe that, as far as could be, the proposals of the Act of 1881 were in all essential particulars final proposals. That was vital to the peace and prosperity of the country, and when a measure like the Land Act of 1881 had been passed, which had so largely interfered with the property of the landlords, and had had the effect of rendering land unsaleable in Ireland, to attempt to re-open the question in the way now proposed would tend to dishearten everyone who desired the real welfare and tranquillity of that country. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had told them that if he were to exceed by one word what was said last year on the subject by the Prime Minister the task of governing Ireland would be made much more difficult even than it was at present, and the future of that country would be seriously imperilled. He hoped, therefore, that few would be found to vote for disturbing the existing settlement of that question without having weighed very carefully the immense responsibility they were incurring.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said, that great part of the criticism offered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had been addressed to matters which could be better dealt with if the Bill were in Committee than at the present stage. He deplored as much as any hon. Member any renewal of agitation which was not peremptorily called for in connection with the Land Question in Ireland; but, he asked, how was that agitation best to be avoided? Was it to be avoided by shutting the door against those who were urging, in a perfectly Constitutional manner, certain Amendments which they conceived to be necessary in the Land Act of 1881; or was it not more likely to be avoided by remedying the defects in that Act which were proved to exist? This was not a re-opening of the Land Question. There was not one of the points touched upon in this Bill that was not made the subject of a deliberate proposal by one Member or another, many of them by himself, during the progress of the Act of 1881 through that House; but they were over-borne, as Irish Members were so often over-borne, by the solid phalanx which supported the Government, and was reinforced by the Opposition. The Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell), he (Mr. Charles Russell) submitted, had last Session taken a very exaggerated view of some of the provisions of this Bill. He must express his regret that the House had not been favoured with the views of the Solicitor General for Ireland, who had recently been in very close contact with, and had felt the touch of, a great Irish constituency—a great constituency, moreover, in that part of the country to which hon. Members on both sides of the House were so fond of pointing as affording a bright example of what should be imitated all over Ireland. Let the Solicitor General for Ireland state what were the opinions entertained on the question raised by that Bill in that law-abiding and most respectable part of the country from which he came. For himself, instead of endeavouring to minimize the effect of the Land Act of 1881, it had been his constant aim to impress on the minds of the Irish people that the passing of that Act, considering the great difficulties to be encountered and the prejudices to be overcome, was a great and solid achievement effected in their interest. He said, therefore, as a sincere friend of that Act, he was anxious to improve it where it was capable of being improved, always within the lines of honesty and justice. Not a word had been said from the Treasury Bench that could be called argument on the proposal that the force of the decree fixing the judicial rent should date back to the day of the application. Could anything be more obviously just than that proposal? Why should those men who had their cases disposed of in six months be put in a better position than those who, without any fault of their own, having applied to the Court with equal expedition, had the settlement of their rent postponed for two or three years? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had, no doubt, sought to minimize the weight of their claim; but he had not said a word to meet the justice of the claim itself. Now, on the question of tenants of town parks, why should those tenants be denied access to the Land Courts? They were tenants of agricultural lands, and that they were to be deprived of the rights conceded to other agricultural tenants, because their lands were in the neighbourhood of towns, he could not admit to be an honest argument. With regard to the leaseholders, was not the real question whether they had been any more free contracting parties with their landlords than other tenants? Could anyone say that they were? It was intolerable to suppose that on one side of a boundary fence there should be men who were tenants from year to year with free access to the Land Court, and on the other side of the fence men with holdings of the same size and character who were debarred from access to the Court. And why debarred? Merely because their contract was on parchment sealed! As to the question of improvements—the great bone of contention—and the clause rightly called Healy's Clause, he himself, in conjunction with the late Mr. Law, then Attorney General for Ireland, drew the clause as it stood in the Act; and he confessed that the result of the clause had disappointed him. The clause was to the effect that no rent should be allowed or be payable in any proceedings under the Act in respect to improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors in title, and for which, in the opinion of the Court, the tenant or his predecessors in title should not have been paid or otherwise compensated for by the landlord. The Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell) last year said that meant going back to the prairie value of the land. Nothing of the kind. Hon. Members would find that in the 7th clause of the Bill there was a distinct recognition of the fact that where there was a distinct increase of value not arising from expenditure either on the part of the landlord or of the tenant, that was properly and fairly to be taken into account for the benefit of the landlord; in fact, it gave to the landlord the unearned increment, and that to a greater extent than he (Mr. Charles Russell) was prepared to concede. He thought that the effects of the proposals of this clause had been greatly exaggerated; it was a mistake to think that it involved any sweeping confiscation of the landlords' rights. If, for instance, a tenant occupied land on which there was a lake, and, at a trifling expense, drained that lake, adding, perhaps, an acre to the farm — in such a case as that, where the improvement was greatly in excess of the outlay by the tenant, it was perfectly fair and just that the landlord should have a proportion of the increased value arising from the improvement. But in the vast majority of cases that arose in agricultural life, where the tenant made the improvement at his own risk, the increase made in the value consequent on that improvement was nothing more than just and adequate compensation to the tenant for what he had done. He thought that the clause was but just to the tenant, and not unjust to the landlord. For these reasons he should vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 72; Noes 235: Majority 163.

AYES.

Arnold, A.
Biggar, J. G.
Blake, J. A.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Burt, T.
Caine, W. S.
Campbell, Sir G.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colthurst, Colonel
Commins, A.
Corbet, W. J.
Cowen, J.

Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Findlater, W.
Gabbett, D. F.
Harrington, T.
Holden, I.
Hopwood, C. H.
Kenny, M. J.
Labouchere, H.
Laing, S.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leamy, E.
Lynch, N.
Macfarlane, D. H
M'Carthy, J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Mahon, E.
Martin, P.
Mayne, T.
Meagher, W.
Molloy, B. C.
Monk, C. J.
Moore, A.
Morley, J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Donoghue, The
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, A.
Peddie, J. D.
Power, J. O'C.
Power, R.
Reid, R. T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Russell, C.
Rylands, P.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, W.
Slagg, J.
Small, J. F.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Synan, E. J.
Thomasson, J. P.
Williams, S. C. E.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.

TELLERS.
Barry, J.
Sheil, E.

NOES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Alexander, Major-Gen.
Amherst, W.A. T.
Anderson, G.
Armitstead, G.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beaumont, W. B.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burghley, Lord
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Buxton, F. W.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
Christie, W. L.
Churchill, Lord R.
Clark, S.
Clifford, C. C.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coddington, W.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Coope, O. E.
Corry, J. P.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Crichton, Viscount
Cropper, J.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cross, J. K.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Davies, R.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Digby, Colonel hon. E.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duff, R. W.
Eaton, H. W.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, G. W.
Emlyn, Viscount
Ewing, A. O.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Feilden, Lieut.-General R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Ferguson, R.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hn. C. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Forster, rt. hn. W. E.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, rt. hon. R. N.
Fowler, W.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Fry, T.
Gibson, right hon. E.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Glyn, hon. S. C.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gordon, Sir A.
Gorst, J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grant, A.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Grey, A. H. G.
Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hastings, G. W.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Herbert, hon. S.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, right hon. J. G.
Inderwick, F. A.
Jackson, W. L.
James, Sir H.
James, C.
James, W. H.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennard, C. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Lawrence, W.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Legh, W. J.
Leighton, Sir B.
Lennox, right hn. Lord H. G. C. G.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Loder, R.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lusk, Sir A.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Lagan, P.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, hon. E.
Marriott, W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Master, T. W. C.
Matheson, Sir A.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Milner, Sir F.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Muntz, P. H.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Northcote, H. S.
Otway, rt. hn. Sir A.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Pender, J.
Percy, rt. hon. Earl
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ramsay, J.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rendlesham, Lord
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, C. T.
Robertson, H.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
Russell, G. W. E.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Samuelson, B.
Scott, M. D.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Severne, J. E.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stafford, Marquess of
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stevenson, J. C.
Strutt, hon. C. H.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. G.

Thornhill, T.
Tillett, J. H.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Waddy, S. D.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walter, J.
Warton, C. N.
Waterlow, Sir S.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watney, J.
Waugh, E.
West, H. W.
Whitley, E.
Williamson, S.
Wilmot, Sir H.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Winn, R.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. S.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.

Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Sir H. H.

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTION.

—o—

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPENDITURE)—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could make Supply the second Order of the Day to-morrow instead of the first?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no time to explain to the right hon. Gentleman the details of the case; but we have gone into the matter carefully, and we do not think we should be justified in making any alteration.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had selected the following Five Members to be the Chairman's Panel, and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under the Resolution of the first of December 1882:—The Right Honourable Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Matthew White Ridley, the Right Honourable George Sclater-Booth, William Shaw, esquire, and Sir Henry Hussey Vivian.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 6th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Medical Act Amendment (23).
Third Reading—Law of Evidence Amendment * (9), and *passed.*

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord President.*)

(NO. 23.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was the same measure which passed their Lordships' House last Session. Their Lordships would remember that the Bill was very fully considered by the House, and that, after considerable discussion and amendment, it was sent down to the other House of Parliament. The Bill was not rejected by the House of Commons, because it was never discussed in that House. It had never been found possible to find time last Session for even a single discussion on the principle of the Bill. Under these circumstances, it appeared to the Government to be the best plan to bring the Bill in again in its original form, and to send it again to the other House, where he hoped this year it would receive due discussion, and, he trusted, be adopted for the benefit of the Medical Profession and of the public. The Bill had been improved in points of drafting in some respects; but there was only one thing that he should mention, and that Amendment referred to the constitution of the Medical Board for Scotland. It would be remembered by those who took an interest in the subject that it was thought right, in accordance with the strong opinion expressed by the Royal Commission which considered the subject, that the Scotch Universities should have a preponderance of representation upon the Medical Board for Scotland; but he (Lord Carlingford) thought it could hardly be doubted that that principle was pushed rather to an excess in the Bill of last year, and that the disproportion between the representation of the Scotch Universities and the Scotch Medical Corporations was somewhat excessive. The number of representatives of the Scotch Universities upon the Scotch Board was placed at eight, while the Scotch Corporations were only given three. In the present Bill he had raised that number of three to five, which would still leave the Universities with a majority, which they were entitled to enjoy. The Bill had some other minor, but still important, provisions—for instance, one dealing with the status and privileges of Foreign and Colonial practitioners in this country, a branch of the subject which had long called for revision and improvement, and on which the status and privileges of our own practitioners in foreign countries and the Colonies entirely depended. But their Lordships would recollect that the main object of the Bill was to put the system of licensing and registration for the purpose of practising medicine and surgery in the Three Kingdoms on a more satisfactory basis than it was on at present, so that security might be given to the public that every practitioner who should have conferred on him the right to practise should be reasonably qualified to do so. This was a matter of great importance to them all, and seriously concerned the credit of the Medical Profession itself. He could not say that the present system attained that object. It was a system under which the right of conferring licences to practise was left in the hands of a number of professional bodies, all independent of one another, acting under a very imperfect responsibility, and all beset with the temptation to compete one with another, and to compete, of course, in a downward direction. That was a temptation which, as was well known, it was not always possible to resist; and the result was a tendency in too many cases to a system of underbidding one another among those bodies, for the purpose of drawing pupils and members each to its own body. The Bill, in accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission, proposed to remedy that state of things by creating a Medical Board in each of the three countries, the Boards to be fairly representative of the present Teaching and Licensing Bodies, and to act under the superintendence of a Central Medical Council, and they alone would have the right of conferring licences to practise. Such a Bill as that, he thought, ought to have a fair chance of success, although several previous Bills had failed. It had the great advantage of being based on the full inquiries made, and the able Report which was furnished, by the Royal Commission, which was presided over by the noble Earl behind him (the Earl of Camperdown). It had also the great advantage of having a large amount of support on the part of the Medical Profession. In point of fact, no previous Bill had enjoyed anything like the same support. The only danger apparently to be expected arose from the alarms—greatly exaggerated and even unfounded alarms—of some of the Licensing Bodies in the Three Kingdoms. These alarms were not entertained by the Universities, but by some of the Medical Corporations, who feared that their privileges and incomes might be sacrificed, or their position injured, by the operation of the Act. The Government did not believe, nor did the Royal Commission believe, that those alarms were justified, or that that would be its effect. They desired that the Medical Corporations should hold their ground, and should flourish and prosper in proportion to the service they rendered to the Profession and the public; and he believed that the Corporations would do so under the provisions of this Bill. The alarms to which he had referred were not felt by all the Corporations by any means; they were not felt by many of their most distinguished members; and the hope and belief of the Government was that they would prove entirely groundless; indeed, he trusted that as the Bill became more thoroughly understood all alarm would be removed. The Government would spare no effort for the purpose of passing the Bill into law this Session; and he hoped that it would be as much for the benefit and credit of the great Profession with which it dealt, as for the advantage of the public generally, who were so deeply interested in it. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord President.*)

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, he greatly regretted that there had not been a longer time allowed to consider the details of this very important Bill. It had only been issued yesterday, and if it were to be read a second time, then it would be without the Profession being able to make itself acquainted with its provisions. Two of the most famous of the Medical Colleges in Ireland were under the apprehension that it might lead to their virtual disestablishment and disendowment. He hoped that the noble Lord opposite (the Lord President) would postpone the Committee on the Bill to a reasonable distant date.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he was grateful to the noble Lord opposite (the Lord President) for having altered the composition of the Board for Scotland as he had announced. The noble Lord had seen his way to do this year, what he had been asked to do last year, and what he (the Earl of Galloway) had then contended for—the giving a little consideration to the Colleges of Scotland as well as the Universities. He thought the proportion of representation as it now stood would meet all the demands of the Scottish Colleges or Corporations.

EARL GRANVILLE said, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Milltown) appeared to be under some misapprehension. The Bill was passed through the Upper House last year, so that the Medical Profession had had ample time to consider it.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that the Bill contained some changes.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) replied, that the measure was identical with that of last year, with the one exception he had mentioned.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read 2ª accordingly.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY asked that some interval should be allowed before the Committee stage was taken.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, the Committee would be fixed for that day fortnight.

Bill *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* the 20*th instant*.

ARMY (HEAD-DRESS).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to move for an humble Address to Her Majesty for a Copy to be laid on the Table of the House of the instructions received by the Committee, of which Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, K.C.B., was appointed President, on the subject of change in the head-dress of the Army, to which reference was made by the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War (the Earl of Morley) in reply to a Question on the 21st of February last, said, it had been rather a surprise to him to hear the statement of the Under Secretary of State for War, that General Macpherson and Sir Archibald Alison, two of the most representative Scotchmen in the Army, had reported in favour of the abolition of the Scotch feather-bonnet. He moved for an Address, in consequence of the discussion that had recently taken place in that House upon the subject; for it had since come to his ears that the Instructions received by the Committee to which he referred was such that they were precluded from giving any opinion as to the advisability of retaining the old head-dress. They had simply been called upon to recommend something to take its place, it having been decided to abolish the head-dress which he held to be still considered in Scotland as the national one. He therefore asked for a Copy of the Instructions in question. He also desired to call attention to the speech delivered by the noble and gallant Lord the Adjutant General to the Forces (Lord Wolseley) at the Fishmongers' Hall on the 28th of February last—as reported in *The Times* of the 1st March—and particularly to the following sentence:—

> "Knowing the recent difficulties and the enormous tax made on the Profession, and knowing also the manner in which the character of the English soldier had been vilified and traduced on many occasions, it was not only a duty but a pleasure on his part to defend the character of the men in whose military worth he believed."

His object was to ask the noble and gallant Lord whether he had made use of the words quoted; for in regard to the latter portion of the extract, he wished especially to know who had vilified the character of the English soldier? He had, however, received a letter from the Clerk of the Parliaments, to the effect that it was not in accordance with the Standing Orders of the House for one Peer to address a Question to another unless he sat on the Ministerial Bench. He was not aware of the Standing Order, and hence the form in which it appeared on the Paper. Had the noble and gallant Lord been present—and he (the Earl of Galloway) regretted he was not—he should have liked to call attention to other remarks made in the speech referred to. His reason for calling attention to the subject was that he could not understand how it could be of advantage to the Service, or the country generally, that anyone in the responsible position of the Adjutant General should give way to temptation and make use of remarks of that sort. He could not imagine what the noble and gallant Lord meant. He (the Earl of Galloway) always took a great interest in military matters, and therefore made a point of reading every speech upon the subject; and he would like the noble and gallant Lord to fully state to the House by whom, upon what occasions, and what was, at any rate, the approximate language which, in the words of the noble and gallant Lord, "traduced and vilified the character of the British soldier;" for language of that sort he (the Earl of Galloway) deprecated. He could not conceive to whom or to what the noble and gallant Lord had been alluding. He begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for Copy of the instructions received by the Committee of which Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Alison, Bart., K.C.B., was appointed President, on the subject of change in the head-dress of the Army."—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

The Earl of MORLEY, in reply, said, the Notice had been put upon the Paper in consequence of a misapprehension of what he had said the other day. He had never made any reference to any such Committee as that mentioned by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway); there were two reasons why he had not done so—first, because he would have been guilty of a great breach of Parliamentary practice in referring to a document which was not in the possession of the House; and, secondly, because the Committee, if it ever sat, which was very doubtful, had never made any Report. The Report to which he did refer was a document of very great importance—namely, a Report which was laid on the Table of the House in February 1881, of a Committee appointed to consider the formation of territorial regiments, as proposed by Colonel Stanley's Committee. The words he quoted were as follows:—

> "It (the proposal) would necessitate the kilting of four additional regiments, which would considerably increase the cost of their clothing. This increase would be counterbalanced if the ostrich feather head dress now worn by kilted regiments were done away with. This head-dress is costly and is never worn on active service. As it has no national origin, we recommend that it should be replaced by the true national head-dress, the bonnet."

That Report was signed without a word of dissent by Sir Archibald Alison and Colonel Macpherson, the Commanding Officer of the Black Watch. The Committee was under the Presidency of Sir Charles Ellice; its other Members were Generals Radcliffe, Bulwer, and Elkington, Lieutenant Colonel Briggs, and Mr. George Ramsay. Was it really worth while to lay on the Table of the House Instructions to a Committee to which he had never referred, and which had never made any Report? He thought it would be absurd to do so. With regard to the second part of the noble Earl's Notice, the noble Earl had scarcely any proper reason for calling attention to those words; for if he had carried his eye a little further down the Report, he would have seen what the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Wolseley) meant. Lower down he said—

> "Was it wise or politic to go about declaring that the Army was composed of miserable creatures drawn from the dregs of the population?"

No doubt, in after-dinner speeches, noble Lords did not use the same guarded language they used in the House. He really could not see anything in the words quoted to call for serious comment. All the noble and gallant Lord meant to do was to defend the character of the soldier of the present day. Although it was said nobody had impugned the character of the British soldier, he (the Earl of Morley) had often heard, in the speeches of the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) himself and "elsewhere," remarks made to the effect that the Army was full of "immature boys" and "untrained lads," expressions which, as the noble Earl knew, did not agree with the Adjutant General's opinion of the Army. He (the Earl of Morley) quite agreed with the noble and gallant Lord in deprecating such uncalled-for statements.

The Earl of GALLOWAY asked the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE MILITARY OPERATIONS ON THE RED SEA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether England is now at war on the Littoral of the Red Sea, and, if so, with whom; or, if not at war, what is the character of the military operation in which English forces are now engaged? said, he thought, that before he put this Question, he ought first to say one word why the Question which originally stood on the Paper a few days ago was postponed. His Question was framed long before the success of our arms; in fact, the day on which it was put down was the day on which the news of that victory reached this country. Therefore, he could not but feel that to put the Question at that moment, when they had just received such news, would have been open to some misconception, or, at all events, to some suspicion, coming immediately as it did after the victory of General Graham. They could now, however, dismiss that success from their minds for the moment, and ask the Government for definite information with regard to the Red Sea operations. It must not be supposed that he for one moment disapproved of the action that had been fought under General Graham, or that he did not sympathize with the great success he had obtained on that occasion. There was no one in their Lordships' House who could feel more satisfaction on receiving the news of General Graham's victory than he did, and he would say frankly that, in the circumstances, it was quite right to fight that action. They must all rejoice at the credit which the British arms had; but now that the action had been fought, there could be no military plans which would be prejudiced by the answer to be given to his Question. General Graham's expedition could have no military meaning unless it was a part of a greater and consistent whole. What he wanted to know was the plan of which General Graham's action was a part. As to the plan on which it was formed they had no information. Again and again the Government had declined to give satisfactory answers to Questions on this point. The noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) had said that the Government would not consent to answer these interrogations, because they were referred to on the occasion of the Vote of Censure. He would like to ask, whether those who lost a friend in Hicks, and those who knew that the public had lost a valuable servant in Moncrieff, had no right to put these Questions? The country was looking with a greatly increasing interest for some statement by the Government. Now, that no possible harm could be done, was the time to answer these Questions. It was quite true that Tokar was relieved by the expedition; but it was also true that the expedition was unnecessary, or, if necessary, was rendered so only by the dilatory policy of the Government. If action had been taken in due time—if, before the fall of Sinkat, the Government had thrown aside the apathy which had so long marked their conduct in connection with Egyptian affairs—it would have been easy to relieve that garrison without striking a blow. Now 3,000 or 4,000 brave men had been killed, and no one could help feeling regret that it should have been necessary to destroy those noble Blacks who opposed with spears and shields the more civilized appliances of our troops. As he had said, if they read the Report which was made to the Secretary to the Admiralty, and which was received at the Admiralty on January 11, they would see that, taking the start of Osman Digna, it would have been perfectly easy at any time for Her Majesty's Government to have relieved Sinkat and those other garrisons without firing a shot, without sacrificing any of our men, and without causing that enormous carnage which, though glory might be reflected on our arms, was nevertheless, in his opinion, disgraceful to our humanity. Up to the end of October, and even up to December, Osman Digna was a person of small importance, whom Tewfik Pasha had repeatedly defeated. It was only after the death of Consul Moncrieff and the defeat of Baker Pasha's force that the tribes rallied round Osman Digna, or that there was any real army to oppose General Graham. Therefore, at any time before November, if the British Government had only recognized in time the necessity which was incumbent upon them to act firmly in the Soudan, Sinkat and the other garrisons would have been relieved without shedding one drop of blood, and the battle of Teb would not have been necessary, for the necessity of that victory would not have caused the loss to our prestige it had. He said that their Lordships ought to know what the plan of the Government was, and of which the battle of Teb, if it meant anything, was a part. They had no information of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government; but Papers laid before Parliament contained some suggestive hints as to the way in which the Government had looked at matters for some considerable time. Communicating at Walmer with the Italian Minister, the noble Earl at the head of the Foreign Office (Earl Granville) said that the Government adhered to the intentions which they had publicly announced; but that their policy was necessarily of a somewhat elastic character, and must to a certain extent be guided by circumstances. The noble Earl also said that he had told the Khedive and the Sultan that Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to assist at the proper time in the defence of Egypt from outside attack. Similar statements were made to Count Karolyi and to M. Waddington. His Excellency Musurus Pasha then called upon the noble Earl and made a very remarkable statement on behalf of his Government. Musurus Pasha said that he had received with the liveliest satisfaction the reiterated assurances of the Government of Her Majesty as to their intention to respect fully the rights of the Sovereignty of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan over Egypt, as well as to a complete and early evacuation of the country by Her Majesty's troops. In fact, all the Governments of Europe were informed that the object of Her Majesty's Government was immediately, or as soon as possible, to withdraw from Egypt. On the other hand, Sir Evelyn Baring in a communication to the Government seemed to point to the fact that some settled policy of one kind or another was an absolute necessity, for he said—

> "The policy of abandoning the Soudan is to be carried out; the finance of Egypt, which is very bad, is to be regulated."

Surely, if the Government were going to carry out all those reforms in Egypt of which we heard, they must stay in Egypt. They could not suppose that if they withdrew the reforms would carry out themselves. Therefore, unless their planned reforms, upon which the Government insisted so much, were a delusion and a sham, they must remain in Egypt. Well, then, he wanted to know what was the policy of the Government? Did they mean to remain in Egypt or did they not? Up to the present time that "elastic policy governed by circumstances," of which the noble Earl spoke, merely meant a helpless and hapless waiting upon events. Surely they had had enough of this waiting on events, and the time was come when the country and Parliament might ask, without being put off by evasive answers, for some more definite pronouncement of the policy of the Government. As far as words went, we still retained the theory of an independent Khedive; but, it would be admitted, we had given it up in practice. No one could read Mr. Clifford Lloyd's Report, which appeared on page 16 of the Papers just presented [Egypt, No. 5 (1884).], without seeing that we were embarked on a series of reforms in Egypt, which rendered it impossible to carry out that policy of withdrawal so constantly enunciated. There was an absolute and radical antagonism between the plans which Mr. Clifford Lloyd tried to put forward and the plans of the Egyptian Government. He would give a crucial instance. Persons who became Christians were thrown into prison on no charge, and the reply of the Egyptian officials was—"We have the right, by Mussulman law, to kill such persons." Three or four lines further on, Mr. Clifford Lloyd said—"Under existing circumstances all this has been changed." That meant that the fundamental law of Egypt had been changed by the action of Ministers sent from this country. That showed that we had undertaken the government of Egypt, and that the Khedive was no longer independent. Therefore, having assumed the government of Egypt, how long were we going to retain it?—notwithstanding the phrase invented by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, followed by the Prime Minister, and repeated by him within the last few days, that we were "to rescue and retire." Such a proposition was entirely and utterly in conflict with the facts of the case. In illustration of the antagonism between those facts and the statements of the Prime Minister and the noble Earl opposite, he would read to the House an extract from a letter which appeared in *The Times* a few days ago from their Correspondent at Cairo. The Correspondent said—

> "No single measure, down to the increase of the salary of a petty official, is made without reference to Sir Evelyn Baring. The condition of the prisons, the complaints from the interior of alleged frauds, the increase of the cattle murrain, the appointment of sanitary officials, disputes with the police, disputes between officials, the question of a site for the new Custom House, the appointments of schoolmasters, and quarrels with missionaries, all these matters, together with the larger questions of finance, the Domains, the Daira, the Capitulations, irrigation, the debts of the fellaheen, and the formation of municipalities, require the almost daily attention of the hardest worked man in Cairo."

Well, having undertaken all those reforms, and having sent out officials from this country, it was absolutely essential that the reforms should be carried out, or else the whole framework of government in Egypt would fall to pieces. How then could Her Majesty's Government talk, as they had done within the last few days, of withdrawing our troops and leaving Egypt in a very short time? What was the state of affairs in the Soudan? With whom, he should like to know, were we at war? We had been engaged in hostilities in Egypt very nearly since the burning of Alexandria, and yet he did not believe that war had ever been declared. He was at a loss to know exactly with whom we were at war. He would like to know whether Turkey had not remonstrated about the position in which we were at present in Egypt? But their Lordships were left without information by Her Majesty's Government, and had to rely on that which came from the daily papers, and that information told them that Turkey had remonstrated. If so, would Her Majesty's Government say to what extent, and in what terms? It had been said that they were not at war; they were merely engaged in military operations; but he must say those military operations had been enduring for a very considerable time, and they bore, in his mind, something very much of the character of war. We had a Fleet at Suakin, we had some of our largest transports there, we had there commissariat stores and ships, and a French Squadron looking on. We had on shore a Naval brigade, an Artillery brigade, and a Cavalry brigade. We had purchased camels at a price which had excited the admiration and wonder of the East, and which, if it had been offered to Osman Digna, would have placed every camel in his army at our disposal. And now we were told that General Gordon had sent for another army, which he said was coming in a few days. And not only that, but we were informed from Khartoum that the Governor General of the Soudan expected that the Slave Trade would settle itself by a rising of the slaves against their masters. General Gordon had anticipated that from the beginning, and no one could look upon such a prospect, or upon the massacres that would ensue, with equanimity. The fact was, it was essential that General Gordon should, before leaving Khartoum, establish some sort of settled government there. Their Lordships have never been informed as to the character of the military operations now going on, although the Government had been asked many times to make a statement upon the subject. What had been the result of the expedition which was sent up the Nile under Colonel Stewart? They had heard that it had returned unsuccessful, and they had a right to ask for information upon that matter. Then they were told the other day that troops were going up the river to Assouan. What was the object of their going there? They had also been told that British troops were to support them a short distance behind. This information they had derived from the public journals, but not a single word did the Government tell the country; and when a question was asked of them, the matter was thrust aside and left unanswered. They did not even know whether the Government were going to hold Khartoum, and there, again, the utterances of Her Majesty's Ministers were extremely uncertain. The other day the Prime Minister stated that they were pledged to withdraw from Khartoum, because it was part of the Soudan. But Suakin was also part of the Soudan. Were they going to withdraw from Suakin, and, if not, how were they going to keep it, and what were they going to do with it? With regard to the Slave Trade, it was all very well to talk of domestic slavery; but a statement had been made that Zebehr Pasha was to govern Khartoum when General Gordon left it. Who was

Zebehr Pasha? They all knew that he was the Chief of the Slave Trade, and if he was left to govern in Khartoum what would be the state of affairs throughout the whole of the Soudan? That rising of the slaves, that servile war which they were told General Gordon anticipated, would settle matters certainly, but it would settle them by devastating the whole of the country, and the last state of the slaves would be worse than the first. He would again ask what were the Government going to do with Suakin? He could understand why it was kept if it was to be used for the repression of the Slave Trade; but when the Government declared that slavery throughout the Soudan was to continue, and when they had the capital of that country in the hands of slave-dealers and slave-owners, what was to be done with Suakin? Was it to be a slave export port, and, if not, how could the Government by their officials proclaim the Slave Trade to be continued in Khartoum, and, at the same time, put an end to it in Suakin? It appeared to him that the policy of the Government was doubtful and contradictory, and that it was one that ought, at least, to be accurately described. They had interfered with the Egyptian Government in every way. They had even gone so far as to diminish the pocket money of the Khedive, and yet he was to be independent. The Government had sent out a Fleet and an Army, blood had been shed, and victories had been won, and yet it appeared that they were not at war. Under all those contradictory circumstances, their Lordships, he thought, had a right to demand from Her Majesty's Government a full and clear explanation of the Questions he had put.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Bury) began by making a very long apology for having done what he had a perfect right to do—namely, postpone his Question from Monday to Thursday. He said he thought it necessary to postpone it on account of the news of the victory which came in the morning; but I wonder what effect it would have had on the noble Viscount's Question if we had received an announcement of defeat. When I saw next morning that Notice was given in "another place" of a discussion of the question, I thought, perhaps, that the postponement had something to do with that fact. It is just as convenient for me to answer the Question on Thursday as on Monday; but I think I have a right to complain that when, day after day, Notice of such a Question was given, the noble Viscount should have occupied about five minutes with the Question, and should have made a very long and discursive speech, in which he insisted upon my answering many Questions of which he has given me no Notice whatever. I do not know that the noble Viscount wishes me to answer the Questions of which he has given me no Notice; but I am quite ready to do so. The operations in the Soudan were undertaken for these two purposes—In the first place, they were undertaken for the relief of the garrison of Tokar; and, in the second place, they were undertaken under the obligation we had incurred when we promised the Khedive of Egypt to assist the Egyptian Government in defending the Egyptian ports in the Red Sea. Now, Suakin happens to be one of these ports. Suakin has been menaced for some time by large numbers of insurgents; and I must say I am utterly unable to follow or to make head or tail of the argument, that if we had done something, we could have saved Sinkat without any bloodshed. What earthly reason is there for supposing that we should not have been opposed then as we have been opposed now? And the argument that we could have relieved Sinkat without effusion of blood seems to me to be devoid of reason. Now, if the noble Viscount had profited by the delay in putting his Question, and had referred to any ordinary book on International Law, I think he would have found it laid down, that there is no such thing as perfect war except between two independent States or Nations; whereas, it is described by these writers that there is a state of uncertain war within certain limits as to persons, places, and things; and I imagine there is not the slightest doubt that the operations carried on, and which have been so highly praised by the noble Viscount to-day, and so appreciated by the people of this country, and which, I am happy to say, have excited the warmest admiration on the part of the most competent critic of military action now living in Europe—that these operations were exactly of the second class, that I have described as laid down by International Law. The noble Viscount, entirely departing from his Question, asks when we are to declare our policy with regard to Egypt. My only difficulty is the one which occurred to one of Louis XIV.'s courtiers, who was frequently honoured by the Sovereign asking him at intervals of three months how many children he had. He always answered, "Two;" but, on one occasion, he suddenly went up to "Eight." On the King expressing some surprise, the courtier, bowing to the ground, said he was afraid of boring His Majesty by always saying the same thing. I am really in much the same difficulty. In the debate the other night, I quoted what our policy was declared to be from the very beginning. I quoted the language which had been used to Europe, I quoted Queen's Speeches, I quoted several Ministerial declarations and other diplomatic documents; but the noble Viscount, who says we are so vacillating, now complains of my language to the Powers being always the same. He is very much surprised that I have always given the same sort of answer to different Ambassadors. Would the noble Viscount, if he were at the Foreign Office, think it his duty to give different answers to different Ambassadors for the purpose of varying the entertainment? I venture, notwithstanding my fear of boring your Lordships, to repeat what the declaration of the Government was. It was to this effect—whether using our own language, or, as I ventured to do the other day, adopting the language of the Conservative ex-Secretary of State —that an obligation had been thrown on us by events; that we were occupying Egypt; that we did not mean to annex Egypt; that we did not mean the permanent occupation of Egypt; but that it would be an act of treachery to Egypt, to Europe, and to ourselves if we withdrew our troops before there was a reasonable prospect of establishing a stable and useful Government in Egypt. That is exactly the policy we have declared from the beginning, which we declare now, and which we have declared 15 or 16 times since the opening of the Session. It may be a good policy or a bad one; but, whether it be good or bad, we have declared it and we abide by it. The noble Viscount gave a number of descriptions of what I have said to the Powers. What I said in my Circular to the Powers was this—that as long as we do occupy Egypt we expect our advice on all essential subjects to be followed by the Egyptian Government. Well, that policy was followed in the time of Sir Louis Malet. It was followed in the time of Lord Dufferin; it was followed in the time of Sir Evelyn Baring. Sometimes there might have been omissions, as happens in this country when Departments do not act according to order; but it was always followed until towards the end of Cherif Pasha's administration. On his refusal to take that advice we merely accentuated a little more strongly the principle which we had announced to the Powers, and on which we had acted up to that time. The noble Viscount, in the former debate, made a most sensible and eloquent defence the other day of General Gordon; but he was entirely thrown over by the noble Marquess behind him (the Marquess of Salisbury). I can only repeat what I have so often said about General Gordon —that there never was an act of greater confidence shown by a Government to an individual than the mission of General Gordon. That confidence may turn out to be misplaced. I sometimes almost think that there is a wish on the part of certain persons that it should turn out to be misplaced. But, still, with regard to ourselves, we have had confidence in him, and we hope and believe it will be fully justified. I would remind you that Henry IV. expressed great remorse, and gave a pledge for the future, when he found that one of his best Ministers had been prevented doing that which was for his—the King's —good in consequence of the too strict instructions with which he had hampered him; and I would go much further than he did. I happened to open an interesting book the other day on Chinese literature, and the first thing I found was a sentence attributed to no less a person than Confucius. It was—

> "If you suspect a man, do not employ him; but if you do employ him, do not suspect him."

I cannot help thinking that that maxim is as applicable to an Administration in this country, at this time, as it was a great many thousand years ago with regard to the Administration in China, Lord WENTWORTH said, those who, like himself, repudiated all complicity with any of the acts of fraud and violence committed in Egypt in the name of England, could not remain silent after this fresh shedding of blood, which cried to Heaven for vengeance. They all knew who was responsible for that slaughter. It was not principally the noble Lords on the Treasury Bench. They were merely the zealous servants of a being more potent than themselves. Three weeks ago he (Lord Wentworth) had heard their revered Master discourse, with more than his usual eloquence, on the love of the Soudanese for their country; and, on a later occasion, he read that he had spoken with loathing and abhorrence—even as an imputation—of the odious policy of blood at any price; and this was the man who, at the same time or immediately afterwards, sent forth an expedition, obviously useless for any purpose except to kill those very Soudanese, from whom, when it was a question of catching votes to keep his Government alive, the right hon. Gentleman declared that he and his Khedive claimed no allegiance. As to the pretended rescue of a few persons at Tokar, who were in perfect safety before General Graham's aggression, he had never heard a more paltry plea to excuse a political crime. In consequence of that crime, they had to deplore the loss of many gallant officers and men; and that was not the worst. What was far more lamentable was that they had fallen in such an enterprize. He could not think without horror of the slaughter of the heroic Soudanese, who, with Spartan bravery, had fought in defence of country, liberty, life, honour, religion. Their glorious resistance against a vindictive invasion was the admiration of the world; and the tragic death of thousands of heroes had brought sorrow and indignation to the hearts of those Englishmen who cared for justice and morality among nations. The unspeakable iniquity of that deed had already, in "another place," been proclaimed by a noble-hearted man, whose memorable words and terrible warning last Monday had startled his countrymen in the intoxication of their Belshazzar's banquet of blood. Much might be said as to the possibility of General Gordon perishing by the sword so recklessly drawn, and of the danger of rousing Mussulman resentment all over the world; but great crimes were not to be condemned only when and because unprofitable. If the Government had been inspired by the most crafty wisdom, that would not sanctify such action. It was suggested that the power of England should be used to crush Mussulman fanaticism. He thought it would be better to quell and conquer the evil spirit among ourselves—a spirit of military fanaticism and race antipathy. He believed that Mussulman fanaticism would never have been heard of if it had not been for the conduct of Western disciples of Mammon and Moloch, and the un-Christian spirit of so-called Christians. He understood there were 65,000,000 Mussulmen in India, and if they were once roused into rebellion no military skill, no material resources at the command of Her Majesty, would avail to save our Indian Empire, and great would be its fall. Before very long the Ministers whose hands were now red with the blood of their own men and of Africans, not their enemies, would have to render an account of their stewardship to the people of England, who, he believed, must return against them the verdict—Guilty of these human sacrifices. He left them to their own reflections; but he could not conclude without appealing to the highest of all tribunals, before which none of the daring denials and sophistries of debate could affect that solemn judgment of the whole matter which must be heard by them—perhaps very, very soon—when they met God face to face.

Earl GRANVILLE: I forgot to answer the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Bury) on one point. He made a reference with regard to Khartoum, and gave an unfavourable account of the position of General Gordon at this time. That unfavourable account has not reached us. Neither is it borne out by the latest intelligence we have received this afternoon, which is to the effect that 1,000 men sent from El Obeid to Khartoum have been attacked and totally defeated by some tribes friendly to General Gordon.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, in rising after the very earnest and striking speech to which we have just listened of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Wentworth), I do not wish to associate myself in any way with the judgment which the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth), in the exercise of an independent discretion, has passed upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government in sending this expedition to the Red Sea. From my point of view, the time to form such a judgment has not arrived. We have not before us the facts in sufficient fulness to enable us to determine whether the lamentable events which have taken place were justified by the causes by which they were brought about. We all deeply lament the terrible slaughter; we must especially lament the slaughter of our own gallant countrymen whom we have sent on this expedition; but whether they fell in a good cause or a bad one—whether it is one of the inevitable sorrows attending the administration of a great Empire like this, or whether the blood of these men does really rest on the head of the Government—I think the moment for expressing our opinion on that point has not yet arrived. I must confess, however, that the somewhat merry speech of the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) has not solved for me many of the difficulties which, the more I consider the policy of the Government, are the more present to my mind, and which I cannot help thinking will be present to the minds of those who have to vote and pay the expense which this policy has involved, even if no other motive impels them to a severe scrutiny. The noble Earl, as I understand, places the whole burden of the defence of this expedition on the fact that it was for the relief of Tokar; but is it worth while——

Earl GRANVILLE: I beg pardon; the noble Marquess has misunderstood me. That is what the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Bury) said; but I say that it was partly to relieve Tokar, and partly to redeem our pledge to the Egyptian Government to help them to defend the Red Sea ports.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Well, I do not know whether even that explanation is at all likely to meet the case. In the first place, the sending of troops to the relief of a place implies that there is some individual to be relieved; but whether it was worth while to shed the blood of 3,000 men for the purpose of relieving a small body of people who did not wish to be relieved, I think is a matter of considerable doubt. If, indeed, this great effort of the Government had been made in time to relieve the unhappy garrison of Sinkat, no one could have questioned or doubted its justice, its humanity, and its wisdom. But made as it was, subject to that curse of procrastination and delay which has been characteristic of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt from the first, I doubt whether the judgment of the country will be favourable to the policy which has been pursued. Was it, as has been suggested, for the purpose of defending Suakin? That, no doubt, was a proper object enough. But have we not advanced much further than in the defence of Suakin? Suakin was not actually attacked. Or was it with the object of repelling any force that may have been brought against it? But there was none, so it was not in repelling any besieging force that this action took place. On the other hand, if it was merely the neighbourhood of a large body of hostile, armed tribes which justified this expedition and the slaughter that ensued, that condition of things exists still, and I am afraid that similar events, equally lamentable, will have to be brought about until there shall be nobody left alive in the neighbourhood of Suakin who is not favourable to the projects of Her Majesty's Government. I confess that I think it will be very hard, at all events, to bring home to the people of that country what the policy is which Her Majesty's Government are pursuing; to us it appears mysterious and inconsistent. They are called rebels; but, as I understand it, the actual ground on which they stand, as acknowledged by Her Majesty's Government, is their own. The Mahdi, whom they serve, has been clothed by Her Majesty's Government with a robe of honour, and declared to be the Sultan of Kordofan. Though the policy of the Government has been to reserve the ports of the Red Sea, they have reserved no part of the interior of the country; and, therefore, the people who are slaughtered as being rebels are not distinguished in any way from people who are inhabiting their own country and defending their own hearths and homes. How, then, can we be justified in making war upon them? Because of these considerations, and not for the purpose of casting the slightest blame on the gallant officers who are employed by this country, I mention these things, with the object of merely pointing out what darkness, inconsistencies, and mystery there is in the policy which the Government are pursuing, and how much ground there was for the Question and the eloquent speech of my noble Friend. But these are not the only mysteries that arise from the exposition which the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has given us. The noble Earl was very eloquent upon General Gordon. He expressed what I hold to be the sound Constitutional view of the relations of the Government and General Gordon. For all that General Gordon does the Government are entirely responsible, and I think it will really clear the discussion and save unnecessary wanderings into irrelevant considerations if I drop the name of General Gordon and say that what has been done by him has been done by the Government. If an officer has been sent into a distant country with which there is no telegraphic communication, the Government might, with some show of fairness, say they were not responsible for each step he decided to take until they had expressed approval of it; but when he is within reach of the telegraphic wire, and when the Government can confer with him at any moment, every word he says and every step he takes is said and taken, not on his own responsibility, but on that of the Government. That being the case, how does the matter stand? How does this extraordinary state of things arise, that while the Government, for the purpose and for no other purpose than that of preventing the Slave Trade, are keeping and holding a portion of the Red Sea, whose unhealthiness is so great that I believe it cannot be held by White troops a little later in the year, they are pursuing an exactly opposite policy at Khartoum, and issuing a mysterious Proclamation in regard to the exact meaning of which there seems to be some doubt, and which has been much canvassed in this House, but as to which the one thing certain is that the Government do not think it advisable to ask General Gordon what it means, and that independent authorities on the Continent of Europe who are acquainted with the subject regard it as being favourable to the Slave Trade—a view which was quite certain to be shared by those to whom it is primarily addressed? Then, what other steps have they taken? If we are to believe the accounts which have been published—and I have every reason to believe they are correct—who is the person that is to replace the Khedive in the government of the Soudan at Khartoum? Why, he is a slave driver—the king of slave drivers—a man stained with every cruelty and every crime that can defile humanity. When I remember the indignation that used some years ago to be poured upon us because the Sultan, over whom we had no authority, employed Chefket Pasha, whose only crime was that he had too severely repressed a rebellion, I confess that I do regard with some surprise the acquiescence of the Government in the appointment of this man, Zebehr Pasha, to the government of the Soudan. But how is it possible that the Natives of Egypt shall believe in the sincerity of a Government in destroying the Slave Trade, when they first issue an ambiguous Proclamation regarding Slavery, and then give power to the man who, of all others, is most associated with that Trade? If we go a little further, the mystery is equally great. The noble Earl spoke in, I think, more distinct language than has yet been done of the fact that the Representative of England had to be consulted in respect of all the circumstances and all the details of Egyptian Government, and, in fact, that the Egyptian Government had to be conducted according to the will of Her Majesty's Government. But he does not seem to have seen that, in admitting this complete control which the English Government have had over the Egyptian Government, he has become altogether responsible for those two disastrous expeditions, for those two terrible slaughters, for all the military arrangements that were made, for the want of caution, for the want of preparation, and for all the disregard of the warnings which led Hicks Pasha and his army, and that of Baker Pasha, with so many officers, to their deaths. I do not think that the tone of hilarity in which the noble Earl undertook his defence is suitable to the grave circumstances of the case. The policy of the Government is dark, mysterious, and unintelligible.

We know that as it proceeds it is marked by blood. We know that it is producing no result, as far as we can see, adequate to the sacrifices we are making; while there is every reason to believe that, under our fostering care, Egypt is bleeding to death. My Lords, I cannot help thinking that, under these circumstances, the noble Earl would better consult the reputation of the Government in which he occupies so distinguished a position by explaining these dark and mysterious contradictions, and by placing before the people of this country a clear, full, and sufficient explanation of a policy which, at present, it is impossible to understand.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he was prepared to admit there was no reason why a Government should not anticipate severe criticism from the Opposition Party as regarded its policy. That had always been the case under our Parliamentary system, and it was a very salutary proceeding. But there ought to be a limit, and the Government had a right to expect, in the case of questions of extreme difficulty, such as those involved in our relations with the people of Egypt and the affairs of the Soudan, that even those who were in Opposition to the Government should show some appreciation of the difficulties which affected not only the Government of the day, but the whole country. The Opposition had confined themselves week after week to violent Party attacks upon the Government, taking advantage in every possible manner of the difficulties which beset this country in dealing with the affairs of Egypt. Therefore, he thought, they had reason to complain of the tone of violence which had characterized the discussions they had heard. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) said the policy of Her Majesty's Government was dark and mysterious. With regard to the charge of mystery, it was singular that the noble Marquess came to such tremendous conclusions on that policy. He, at all events, seemed to have no doubt about it. He said that the policy of the Government was one which led the country to see that that policy had been followed by blood, inextricable disaster, and difficulty. He (the Earl of Kimberley) denied that the policy of the Government was dark and mysterious. It was open and clear. With regard to Suakin the Government had said what their policy was; but the noble Marquess conveniently, in consequence of the correction administered to him by his (the Earl of Kimberley's) noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was going to limit his remarks to the relief of Tokar, because he knew very well that that was a very patent sophism. If he had looked at the matter fairly, he must have admitted that the relief of Tokar was not the only and primary object of the expedition which was undertaken. He had been told again and again that the Government had given to the Khedive of Egypt their engagement to protect the Red Sea ports. That was an engagement which this country was bound to carry into effect. It was said that the Government had engaged to protect those ports, but that here was a portion of the Soudan which, according to the policy announced, was to be handed over to the inhabitants, and that they were merely attacking people who were defending their own country. It was said that these people were peaceful. He did not think they were. When distinctly informed by English officers that a communication of a peaceful character was to be made to them, they as distinctly replied that they intended to drive the British Force into the sea. How absurd and ridiculous it would be, and how servile should we have become, if, after having undertaken to defend the ports on the Red Sea, the Government were deliberately to say that they would not take any measures necessary for clearing out of the neighbourhood those persons who were threatening our Forces. No one, for a moment, would surely say so. If they were of opinion that war was never justifiable, he could understand it. But if war was justifiable at all, it was so in this instance, when measures were rendered necessary for the defence of a place that was threatened. If they had not taken the necessary steps to clear out that force, their policy would have been both inconsistent and cowardly. It was also impossible to limit operations in the manner suggested. If a place had to be defended, the troops must go to such a distance from that place as was necessary to defend other places that were attacked. If they had acted otherwise, they might have had to keep for months, perhaps for years, a considerable garrison in one of the hottest places in the world, waiting until it pleased Osman Digna and his followers to attack. Such a proposition was most absurd. The noble Marquess seemed to view with great apprehension and alarm the possibility of further bloodshed. He (the Earl of Kimberley) was quite ready to admit that there not only might, but probably would be, further bloodshed. The Government had directed General Graham to summon Osman Digna and his followers to disperse, and to take measures to compel them if they did not. It might be that Osman Digna would obey—he hoped he would—but if he did not, the Government had indicated what was to follow—the General commanding would have no alternative but to use force. There was nothing dark or mysterious about that. It was as clear and intelligible as any policy could possibly be. As regards General Gordon, he was very glad that the noble Marquess intended to drop all further mention of him, for he had been considerably struck by the fact that the noble Marquess had never had anything good to say of that gallant officer during the present Session.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I beg pardon. I have expressed the highest admiration of General Gordon.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that was somewhat singular, for, however high an opinion the noble Marquess might have of General Gordon, he had, at any rate, spoken of every one of General Gordon's acts with the greatest severity. The noble Marquess thought, however, to escape from this by one of the most dangerous doctrines he had ever heard—namely, that when an agent of the Government was at the other end of a telegraph wire he was to have no liberty of action. Everything which the agent said and did was according to the doctrine of the noble Marquess to be dictated by the Government at home from Downing Street. He (the Earl of Kimberley) could not conceive of any system more likely to be followed by disaster than that. He would admit that the telegraph wire did impose new responsibilities on the Government, and that it was a new source of difficulty; but he had always held that there was nothing more dangerous than to push the system of telegraphic communication too far, for, by doing so, they took away all sense of responsibility and of liberty of action on the part of their officials abroad. In the case of a place so distant as the Soudan, they must interfere, if they interfered at all, with very much less knowledge than those upon the spot; and he thought it would have been a great mistake to have taken the entire responsibility on themselves and have dictated to General Gordon everything he should do in regard to affairs about which he must know a great deal more than the Government. He knew that the noble Marquess was not likely to forego any Party advantage; but let them consider the extreme difficulty of General Gordon's position in the Soudan. He would almost have been inclined to think that it was one of such extraordinary difficulty that there might have been some feeling as to the impropriety of passing these criticisms, and that the noble Marquess might have made some allowance for him. They had sent out one single individual, accompanied by one gallant officer—Colonel Stewart—and had imposed upon him an extraordinary task, 'that of endeavouring to extricate the Egyptian garrisons from the Soudan, and to put an end to the present state of affairs there. Was it possible to conceive an operation of greater difficulty or one in regard to the carrying out of which they must more completely trust the man they employed? It was out of the question for the Government at home to devise the exact measures by which he was to succeed. It was only the peculiar qualities of General Gordon and the peculiar knowledge which he possessed of the country that gave him a chance of success. Now as to General Gordon's Proclamation about slavery. He (the Earl of Kimberley) would yield to no one in his detestation of slavery and the Slave Trade. There was no subject in regard to which there was a stronger feeling on the part of the whole British Nation. There was no subject in regard to which there was a more general concurrence of opinion than that we ought to do everything in our power to suppress slavery. But in the past they had not deemed it necessary to decree that slavery in any country which they came to occupy should immediately cease the instant that occupation took place. His noble and learned Friend (the Lord Chancellor) alluded the other night to a small war in which they were engaged during the existence of the late Government, and which resulted in their assuming a Protectorate over three States in the neighbourhood of the Straits of Malacca. In two of those States slavery existed as a domestic institution. Did the Government say that slavery was instantly to cease? No. What they did was this. They said that measures would be taken gradually to put an end to that institution; but it continued for years after, and was still existing when he went to the Colonial Office. In fact, he did not think it had yet altogether ceased. It was therefore obvious that, under certain circumstances, they had allowed domestic slavery to exist in places under our protection. The Gold Coast offered a still stronger instance of this, for there it existed during the whole period of our Protectorate until it was abolished by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) a few years ago. Were they, then, to be called on suddenly to become so squeamish in regard to the Soudan, a country over which they exercised no Protectorate and which was to be evacuated by Egypt, and announce that slavery must cease the moment British occupation began? Was General Gordon to be denounced because he did not interfere with domestic slavery? Why, if the Soudan had been under our own dominion, no Government would have ventured at once to announce that slavery was to be abolished. Were they to throw obstacles in the way of General Gordon by raising up against him the feeling which existed against slavery? That, he maintained, was an unworthy thing to do. It was an attempt to impede him in the performance of his arduous duties. His conduct in the matter was plain, simple, intelligible, and defensible, and needed no excuse. With regard to Zebehr Pasha, the noble Marquess said that he was to be appointed Governor of Khartoum. He saw an announcement in the newspapers, and he said, without making any inquiry—"Oh; you have countenanced slavery, and you have decided to appoint to the Governorship of Khartoum, a man deeply involved in the Slave Trade." How did he know that they had decided anything of the kind? He had no ground whatever for saying either that General Gordon would have a successor, or that he would be Zebehr Pasha or any other man. At any rate, when he learnt that the Government had chosen Zebehr Pasha, it would be time enough to criticize his character. In the meantime he ventured to hope, even at that late hour of the discussion that, while the acts of the Government were subjected to the severest criticism, there might be a due regard for the difficulties in which this country was placed and which would have to be faced by whatever Administration happened to be in Office.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he wished to point out that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) had merely stated that the Government were responsible for the acts of General Gordon, and that was not disputed by Her Majesty's Government. As to General Gordon's Proclamation, assuming the Government's responsibility, it certainly was a horrible thing for Englishmen to be obliged to countenance the existence of slavery in the Soudan; but he was quite willing to admit that, under certain circumstances, General Gordon might have had no other course open to him than that which he pursued. This did not absolve the Government from blame for having allowed the Soudan to get into the condition in which General Gordon found it. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) had stated that if we were to withdraw from Egypt until there was a reasonable chance of a firm and lasting Government being established there, we should be guilty towards this country, Egypt, and Europe. He entirely agreed with that statement. The difference between his views and those of the Government turned on the interpretation of the word "reasonable." He did not intend to travel over the ground of Egyptian affairs again; but would acknowledge that the Government had been consistent in the statements which they had made, but they had been so vague as to leave them in doubt as to what their real policy was. They had said nothing whatever as to their future policy in the Soudan, or, at all events, as to the means they intended to take for carrying it out; and their Lordships wanted more light from them in the matter. They had stated that they had given a pledge to the Khedive to defend the ports of the Red Sea, and no doubt they had; but he would like to know who would be responsible for protecting them—this country or the Khedive? He desired to point out that not many weeks would elapse before the heat in that part of the world would become intolerable, and heavy rains set in in the mountains. They could not employ White troops for any length of time under such circumstances, and it might be well to know whether Her Majesty's Government proposed utilizing the services of Egyptian or Indian soldiers. Again, there was a great difference between operations conducted against civilized troops and against a horde of Arabs; and, that being so, he must point out that merely to disperse the rebels afforded no reasonable security against their re-assembling on the first opportunity. He thought that Her Majesty's Government might have given the House some indication of the means they intended to take for the protection of those ports; that they might have given the House some idea whether they had a reasonable hope of breaking up the rebel force so completely as to render it impossible that an attack should be made on Suakin; whether they intended to employ Egyptian troops for the purpose; and what their intentions were with regard to the withdrawal of the British troops from the Soudan and from Egypt. He must repeat that this matter seemed to him of immense importance owing to the season of the year; and he could not understand why the Government, even if not inclined to give the country any information about their general policy, should object to give the House and the country any indication of how they intended to carry out their obligations to protect the ports of the littoral of the Red Sea.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he was surprised to hear the speech of the noble Earl who had last spoken (the Earl of Dunraven). The tone evinced in that speech was quite unworthy of, and entirely at variance with, the sentiments to be expected of a patriot. After hearing the speeches delivered from the Treasury Bench, he was surprised that the noble Earl should have condescended to ask such a series of Questions in regard to how military *minutiæ* and other matters of detail were to be carried out. He did not know who could or would answer them; because, after the declaration of a general policy, the working out of the military details was left to the General Officers in charge of the expedition. The Government had stated their policy; and it seemed to him that the Questions put by the noble Earl were absurd on the face of them, and Questions which no one having the good of his country at heart would put at the present moment to the Ministry. He (the Marquess of Huntly) had listened for 10 days past to the speeches that had been delivered on this question. The practice was to put a Question to the Government in regard to a single and, perhaps, insignificant point, and then to found, on the reply, all sorts of other Questions involving the whole policy of the Government. He must say that, whatever their views in regard to the policy of the Government, he thought this a very irregular and obnoxious course of procedure. If there was a matter which had been thoroughly thrashed out and become nauseous, it was the question of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. Every single point that could have been raised bearing upon the Egyptian Question had been raised over and over again, and in his opinion they had all been completely and fully answered by the Members of Her Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE said, he did not think the House would follow the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly) in the opinion he had expressed. It must be remembered that the question that had been raised, that of Egypt, was agitating the mind of the whole country at that moment, and the Government did not seem to him to enter upon it with the gravity which it required. They appeared to think that Egypt was in such a state of prosperity in the hands of its present able Governors, that the country ought not to ask any question as to their policy. In his opinion, and he was not singular in holding it, that was not the feeling of most of the thinking people of England, who were deeply interested in the affairs of Egypt. The Government must also remember that their policy in Egypt was being closely watched by the whole of Europe. The other countries of Europe were just as much interested in the pacification of Egypt and the manner in which it was pacified, and as to a decided policy being put forward, as were the people here. The Opposition were simply stating, and, as the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly) thought, with so much impropriety, that they did not think that the mode in which the affairs of Egypt were being conducted was conducive either to the interests of this country or the interests of Europe.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he did not speak of the impropriety of challenging the policy of Her Majesty's Government, but of daily putting Questions on particular details and then raising general debates on them.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE said, the noble Marquess certainly used very strong terms. He (the Earl of Hardwicke) thought he used the word "nauseous," which was a word generally used in regard to smell; and the Opposition certainly did not readily submit to such execration of their really patriotic feelings. They were simply doing what they thought right in asking the Government to state clearly to the country what they meant to do in Egypt. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told them that the policy of the Government was what it had been; but he (the Earl of Hardwicke) wanted to know what that was? He did not wish to make any attack on the Goverment as to their military action, for he thought it was necessary, and that the troops had valiantly done their duty. He could not, however, call it a glorious victory, for it was to be lamented that our troops should have to fight against such troops as they had fought against, and that there should have been such a fearful slaughter. To his mind, the policy of the Government was only calculated to excite a feeling of wonder; and he would, therefore, most earnestly repeat and impress upon them that what the country desired was that they should make a decided declaration that they meant to govern Egypt, not as a Provisional Government, but by a Protectorate, so long as they had the power to admit of the publication of proclamations in regard to the Slave Trade, and so long, in short, as they exercised the whole theory of power in Egypt. He thought Europe should be made to understand that that was what was intended, and that the Government should say that they proposed to put Egypt in a state of prosperity, and would not leave the country until that was done.

LORD TRURO said, some noble Lords considered that the policy of the Government was vague and mysterious, and that it had not been sufficiently declared; but, in his opinion, as he understood it, it was extremely simple. It was, in the first place, the maintenance of the navigation of the Red Sea. It was to establish, if it were possible, a permanent and satisfactory Government for Egypt, and to do so, if possible, while contributing to the freedom of the Soudan. From that policy there had been no deviation. Did anyone believe that the Opposition were really seeking for a declaration of the policy of the Government? He did not understand so; in his opinion they were really asking for details about matters which lay in the womb of time, for an explanation of the conduct of the Government in future circumstances about which nothing was now known. The incessant renewal of Questions of that kind was embarrassing to the Government and preposterous, and might have extremely mischievous effects in regard to the mode of conducting Public Business. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Hardwicke) had referred to the opinion of Foreign Powers; but he (Lord Truro) had never heard of any protest being offered by any Foreign Power as to the course which Her Majesty's Government were taking. We were in Egypt with the consent of the Foreign Powers, therefore it was rather too much to say that the manner in which we were conducting Egyptian affairs was inconsistent with the views entertained by Foreign Powers.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE said, he had not made that statement.

LORD TRURO, continuing, said, that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had been declared over and over again, and had been most consistently maintained. It was, therefore, much to be regretted that the Opposition should think it expedient, or wise, in their own interests as the Opposition, to pursue the Government unceasingly with harassing Questions, which must tend not so much to damage the Government as to embarrass the conduct of affairs in Egypt. Nothing but mischief, as he had said, could ensue from their adoption of that course of proceeding.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Seven o'clock, till To-morrow,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 6*th March*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—R.P.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—West Lancashire Railway (Extensions).*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—City of Norwich (Mousehold Heath) Provisional Order * [105]; Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order * [106]; Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) [125].

Committee—Summary Jurisdiction over Children (Ireland) [75]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Freshwater Fisheries Act Amendment [57-129].

Third Reading—Mr. Speaker's Retirement * [123], and *passed, nemine contradicente.*

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE REVENUE—THE PARCEL POST.

MR. SALT asked the Postmaster General, Whether the proceeds derived from the Parcel Post is such as to justify an expectation that no diminution of the surplus Post Office Revenue will appear in the Estimates of the present year?

MR. FAWCETT: Before the Parcel Post was introduced it was estimated that the number of parcels that would be carried in a year would be 27,000,000. This estimate has not been reached, as the number we are now carrying is at the rate of about 20,000,000 a-year. The average weight of each parcel carried, and, consequently, the postage on each parcel carried, is less than was anticipated; and, in consequence of these circumstances, the Revenue has not yet come up to our estimates. As there is nearly another month in the present financial year, and as the Estimates of the Postal Revenue of the next financial year have not yet been made, I am not in a position to give a precise answer to the Question of the hon. Member. I think, however, there will not be any material falling off in the surplus Postal Revenue. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer intends, I understand, to refer to the subject in considerable detail in his Budget Speech, and I think we shall then be in a better position to give definite information to the House.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—THE SWORDS BOROUGH SCHOOL.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps he proposes to take with regard to the Borough School at Swords; and, how soon may the inhabitants expect the grievances under which they labour to be remedied?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, whenever I have an opportunity of introducing the Bill dealing with the Endowed Schools in Ireland the Borough School of Swords will be included.

MR. HEALY: This is a matter which has been delayed for some years, and will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of giving this Bill precedence over the Sunday Closing Bill?

[No reply was given.]

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—MR. EDWARD KENDALL, J.P.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Edward Kendall, J.P. Ballinaboy, Clifden, county Galway, one of the signatories to the Rossmore Protest for Galway County, recently refunded to the Land Commission some money which he had obtained from the Government under the Arrears Act; if he will explain under what circumstances this was done; and, if he has any objection to produce the affidavits made by Mr. Kendall to obtain the amounts?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is the case that Mr. Kendall refunded to the Land Commissioners a sum of £5, which he had received under the Arrears Act, on behalf of Mr. Eyre, a landlord for whom he was acting. The circumstances of this transaction, into which I have closely inquired, were not such as to reflect in any way on the probity of Mr. Kendall. They arose entirely out of a difference of opinion between him and the Land Commissioners, as to whether a certain tenant of Mr. Eyre's was or was not entitled to the benefit of the Arrears Act. The Land Commissioners eventually decided that he was not. Mr. Kendall held to his former opinion, and repaid the money under protest. The affidavits made by Mr. Kendall were in the usual form prescribed under the Act.

ARMY (INDIA)—PAY OF QUARTERMASTERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the pecuniary benefit granted by the Royal Warrant of 25th June 1881, and which took effect from 1st July 1881, were extended to all ranks of the British Army in India except Quartermasters; whether any representations were made by these Officers on the subject to their superiors, and with what result; whether the claims of such of them as held the rank of Captain, when admitted, were only allowed from the 1st October 1882, thus depriving them of fourteen months' difference in pay, &c. which was accorded to all other ranks; and, whether all Quartermasters serving in India, and who are below the rank of Captain, are still deprived of the benefits of the Warrant alluded to, notwithstanding the fact that they may have been in the enjoyment of these benefits before going to India?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Royal Warrant of June 25, 1881, gave no officer or soldier any right to higher emoluments in India. It was especially laid down that the provisions regarding full pay and allowances did not apply to "our Indian Empire." It is not the case that the pecuniary benefits of the Warrant were extended to all ranks except Quartermasters. Where the Royal Warrant gave actual promotion, some, but not the full, pecuniary benefits of the higher rank were given to regimental officers in India. Representations were made on behalf of the Quartermasters and Riding Masters, and it was decided to raise the Indian allowances, but not the pay of those who were of 10 years' service and upwards, and these improved rates came into effect from the date of their being granted. The aggregate Indian pay and allowances of those below 10 years' service was considered adequate.

SUPPLY—ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES.

Mr. SALT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will arrange that the Estimates of the present year shall contain a statement of the extra receipts taken in aid of the Army and Navy Estimates, so as to allow a comparison to be fairly made with the Estimates of former years?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, Sir; I gave, if I remember rightly, a qualified engagement to this effect last year, and when the Army and Navy Estimates are in the hands of hon. Members it will be seen that the desired comparison is shown. The part of the Statistical Abstract which shows the comparative Public Expenditure for the last 15 years has also been amended with the same object.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—THE RAILWAY TO QUETTA.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If his attention has been directed to a Minute written in 1881 by Mr. Rivers Thompson, then Member of the Viceroy's Council, now Governor of Bengal, in which he alludes to the orders for the destruction of part of the Railway to Quetta, in the following terms:—

> "But perhaps the most grievous and humiliating part of the orders (from England) is that which affects not only the stoppage of the Railway works now under construction by the Nari Gorge, but the dismantling of the rails and the destruction of the earthworks already completed to a considerable distance toward Quetta."

These orders, in his opinion, constitute

> "A wilful and deliberate surrender of advantages gained after a vast expenditure of time and thought and money, and which would subserve peaceful administration much more than they would supply the military requirements of our position at Quetta." (Affghanistan, No. 4, page 10, 1881);

and, if he would lay upon the Table of the House an estimate of the increased cost to the finances of India, caused by the destruction of material and dispersion of establishments collected by the late Government for the purpose of making that very Railway to Quetta, which, in 1881, Her Majesty's Government repudiated, but in 1884 they desire to construct?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I have read the Minute to which the noble Lord directs my attention; and in reply to his Question, I can only say that we have no data at the India Office which will enable us to form such an Estimate as that he asks for. But should it be decided to proceed with the railway to Quetta, the Government of India will, of course, furnish full Estimates of the cost of the undertaking, which the noble Lord will have an opportunity of comparing with any previous Estimates.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: All the previous Estimates?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I have made an examination in the Office, and I have not been able to find a previous Estimate. I believe no such Estimate was made.

POST OFFICE (METROPOLIS)—LETTER CARRIERS IN THE WESTERN DISTRICT.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware that the long existing complaint of the letter carriers of the Western District of London, in reference to the number of hours over the eight per diem for which they are engaged, has not, in their opinion, been rectified; whether the recent order directing them to collect and deliver parcels under one pound will not increase their already heavy work; and, whether, considering the exceptional nature of the work of this district, he could make arrangements with a view of either equalising the work performed by letter carriers all over London, or specially remunerating those who have hours of work in excess of their brother employés?

MR. FAWCETT: In reply to the noble Lord, I may state that a considerable increase of postal business has taken place in the Western District, and that in consequence an addition of force has been provisionally sanctioned, which will have the effect of relieving the postmen. The men are not engaged to work for any specified number of hours; but their duties are, as far as possible, limited to about eight hours a day. The average number of parcels which they carry is so small that it does not appreciably affect their work or attendance. A permanent re-arrangement of the force is under consideration; but the details require somewhat close investigation.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT (1883)—INQUIRY AT NENAGH.

MR. MAYNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Did the Local Government Board Inspector, Mr. Bourke, at an investigation, under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, held at Nenagh, on the 20th February, allow a landlord, Mr. Twiss, of Birdhill, county Tipperary, to examine a Poor Law Guardian, Mr. Caffery, of Birdhill, on oath, and refuse permission to Mr. Caffery to examine Mr. Twiss; did Mr. Bourke, when questioned as to his reasons for so doing, refuse to give any; did Mr. Bourke give full permission to landlords to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and give only a very limited permission to Poor Law Guardians and others to examine landlords; and, if so, does the Local Government Board approve of his action; and, will he state if there is any objection to allowing non-professional men to take such part in investigations under the Labourers (Ireland) Act as they were allowed to take under the Arrears Act?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, Mr. Bourke states that he has no recollection of having refused permission to the Poor Law Guardians to examine Mr. Twiss, and he believes that he gave no facilities to landlords that he refused to other persons; but he adds that more explicit information as to the course which the inquiry took will be available when the shorthand writer who reported the proceedings sends in the transcript of his notes. Any person interested may attend at an inquiry under the Labourers' Act and object to a scheme proposed; but no person can examine witnesses without the consent of the Inspecter conducting the inquiry.

COMMISSIONERS OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND) — ATTENDANCES AT BOARD MEETINGS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, in consequence of the absence of Lord O'Hagan and of the O'Conor Don from the meetings of the Commissioners of Intermediate Education in Ireland, considerable delay has taken place in the publication of the results of the Intermediate Examinations, and injury to the other business of the Board; and, if so, will he provide a remedy against such delay?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the Commissioners of Intermediate Education informed him that no such delay or injury to the business of the Board had occurred either in the manner suggested or from any other cause. He might add that he was told—and it was within his own cognizance — that the O'Conor Don had been presiding at

Kingstown, and attending the Board very closely.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What change Cetewayo's death has made in the views of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the expediency of adopting one of the alternative courses recommended for the settlement of Zululand by Sir Henry Bulwer in his Despatches, Nos. 142 and 145 [C. 3864]?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: I regret that I am not in a position to give as yet an answer. We are in telegraphic communication with Sir Henry Bulwer with reference to the changed state of circumstances in Zululand, and we hope shortly to be able to come to a decision.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—ACTION OF THE MAYO SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Mayo Sub-Commissioners fixed the judicial rent of the holding of James Tunny, situate in Blaimore, Foxford, without seeing the land, or sending anyone, on their behalf, to see it?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the Land Commissioners informed him that the case was struck out by the Sub-Commissioners, as there was no appearance by either party.

EGYPT—THE PRESS LAWS—THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the suppression of the Cairo newspaper, *The Bosphore Egyptien*, has been duly decreed according to the Egyptian Press Law; and, if so, under what article of that Law, and for what offence; or whether it has taken place at the instance, or with the sanction, of Sir Evelyn Baring without reference to that Law; and, if the latter, what have been the specific grounds for this confiscation of Foreign property by Her Majesty's representative?

Mr. O'BRIEN: Perhaps the noble Lord will answer this Question of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy) at the same time, Whether any official information has yet been received at the Foreign Office respecting the decree for the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien*, published in Cairo; whether the decree was issued by the authority of Mr. Clifford Lloyd; whether it has the sanction of Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether a copy of the publication objected to will be laid upon the Table of the House? I would ask him, also, whether his attention has been called to the fact that another paper, *The Oriental Mirror*, has been suppressed by Mr. Clifford Lloyd?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In answer to the hon. Members, I may state that no official information has been received at the Foreign Office; but I have already informed the House that the suspension of this newspaper is a matter with which the Egyptian Government are competent to deal, and is a question of administration about which Her Majesty's Government need not interfere. I cannot give the hon. Member any information about *The Oriental Mirror*.

Mr. M'COAN: The noble Lord has not answered a single section of the Question I put. I beg leave to give Notice that I shall put the Question again, when I hope to receive an answer. On an early day I shall call attention to the whole circumstances of this case.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (SCOTLAND) BILL—SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mr. BAXTER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the Bill for creating a Secretary for Scotland is ready; and, as it is practically unopposed, if it is to be introduced at once?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am very glad of the encouraging nature of the right hon. Gentleman's Question. It is refreshing to hear that there is any Bill, especially a Government Bill, which is practically unopposed. If that is so in this case, we are quite ready to go on with the Bill. If we find that there is practically no opposition, it will be a pleasing duty to introduce it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary has not noticed the nature of the Question. It speaks of creating a Secretary of State for Scotland.

Mr. BAXTER: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. It does not speak of a Secretary of State; but of a Secretary for Scotland.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is merely a question of a name. I do not care much what name it goes by; but certainly the deputation which waited on the Prime Minister made it distinctly understood that they did not ask for a Secretary of State at all.

AFGHANISTAN—THE FRONTIER—CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When the Correspondence between the Government of India and the Ameer of Afghanistan with respect to the defence of the frontier will be produced?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Correspondence to which the right hon. Gentleman refers will be included in the Papers on Central Asia which my noble Friend will present.

In reply to Mr. Bourke,

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that the Papers might be ready in three weeks.

PORTUGAL—RAILWAY CONCESSIONS.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Portuguese Government, by decree April 16th 1879, withdrew a concession for a Railway in Portugal without paying for land purchased and works executed by an English contractor, and conferred the concession upon Portuguese subjects, under engagement to pay the ascertained value of the line, which was afterwards determined by a duly appointed commission of engineers to be £18,200; whether that sum, or any part thereof, has ever been paid; whether, in response to the reiterated remonstrances of the English Minister in Lisbon, the Portuguese Government, in November 1882, gave its promise that, on certain conditions being complied with, they would prohibit the Railway making its junction with the Government main line, and issue a decree to the effect that the new Company would not be permitted to exercise any privilege "until the matters in dispute should have been judicially settled;" whether notice that the conditions precedent had been duly complied with was given by our Minister in Lisbon, upon which the said decree was published in due form; whether, notwithstanding such decree having been duly issued in the "Diaris," they permitted the Company to complete its junction and to open its Railway, so that, without any payment having been made, the Portuguese Government has deprived a British subject of his property, and handed it over to Portuguese subjects, for whose benefit and that of the Government itself it is now being worked; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will lay the Correspondence upon the Table of the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The terms of the concession under which the new Company obtained possession of the completed section of the line will be found in the Paper Commercial, No. 31 (1882). They bind the Company to answer before the competent tribunals for all claims which refer to acts done by the old Company. The amount of the liability of the new Company to the contractor referred to in the Question has not as yet been decided by the Courts of Law. The circumstances under which the line was opened, although Mr. Dixon's claims had not been satisfied by the new Company, cannot be explained within the limits of an answer, but will be fully shown in further Papers, which will be presented to Parliament if the right hon. Member will move for them.

THE RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS—APPEALS.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the statement made by a portion of the Press is correct, that the right of appeal from the judgment of the Railway Commissioners, to be given in the Bill about to be introduced by the Right honourable Gentleman, is an appeal only as regards questions of Law, and not as regards matters of fact?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he had not seen the statements in the Press to which the noble Lord referred. He had suggested to the Railway Companies and the other interests concerned, with whom he was still in communication, that there should be an appeal from the Railway Commissioners on questions of law, but not on questions of fact, and that the Court of Appeal should determine whether the question was one of law or of fact.

Mr. R. H. PAGET asked when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take the second reading of this Bill?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was not able to inform the House.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUND—FAMILIES OF COASTGUARDSMEN.

Mr. HARRINGTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that the wives and children of Coastguard men have been exempted from the provisions made for the widows and children of Marines, Sailors, and others out of the Greenwich Hospital Funds; if so, what is the reason for the distinction; and, whether he can hold out any hopes that the claims of the widows and orphans of Coastguards will be entertained?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Coastguardsmen entered before 1856 are treated as civilians. In cases of fatal accident on duty their widows and children have always received pensions. Men entered since 1856 have been drawn from the Fleet, and have been treated in all respects as seamen. Their widows and children are entitled to the pensions from Greenwich Hospital which have been recently established. The pensions to both classes are nearly similar in amount.

VENEZUELA—COMMERCIAL DUTIES.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government has yet succeeded in getting the Venezuelan Government to implement the obligations of the treaty it has been violating by charging thirty per cent. extra duty against goods from British Colonies; whether they have yet received any information regarding the seizure of the two vessels in the Maturin River by the Venezuelan Government on the allegation that they were trying to evade that duty; whether some of the crews, being British subjects, were imprisoned for several months; and, whether any redress is to be got for that imprisonment, and for the damage to the vessels?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: With regard to the differential duties, Her Majesty's Government have now under consideration certain proposals which, it is hoped, will be accepted by the Venezuelan Government, and which will effect the removal of the duties complained of. Her Majesty's Government have received Reports from Her Majesty's Minister at Caracas upon the subject of the seizure of the two vessels in the Maturin River by the Venezuelan authorities, and the imprisonment, for various periods, of some of the crews, who were British subjects. The crews have been released. The action of Her Majesty's Minister, in making representations to the Venezuelan Government, has been approved; and he has been informed that, after communication with the Government of Trinidad, he will be furnished with instructions as to the redress which Her Majesty's Government will require for the acts of the Venezuelan authorities. The Colonial Office have been requested to instruct the Governor of Trinidad to furnish Reports upon the cases.

SUNDAY CLOSING ACT (WALES)—OPERATION OF THE ACT.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the effect of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales has been to increase the amount of drunkenness on Sunday in Welsh counties; and, as reported in the newspapers of the 3rd March, in the case of the town of Wrexham, to lead to the establishment of large numbers of illicit drinking dens?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no actual figures to give with regard to the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales, because those statistics have not been prepared. But the report I have heard from Wrexham has not been favourable to the condition of that town on Sundays. But there are some Returns—and this is a matter of considerable interest—to which I would refer the hon. Member on this matter. In Scotland, as he knows, Sunday closing has been in operation for a great many years, and there has been a Return moved for by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson)—[*Cries of* "Wales, Wales!"] I will give him two figures from it which will supply him with what he wants to know as to the effect of Sunday closing.

Mr. GUY DAWNAY: My Question refers to Wales, and not to Scotland.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I thought the hon. Member would like to know the effect of Sunday closing in Scotland. ["No, no!"] There is a rule of law that when a Member asks a Question he ought to take the answer. ["No!"] I do not wish to press upon the House anything they do not care to hear; and all I will say is, that I refer the hon. Member to Return No. 330, Scotland, where he will find some useful information on this subject.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—CONGRATULATIONS OF FOREIGN POWERS.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government have received congratulations from any of the Great Powers upon the successful result of General Graham's Military operations in the Soudan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Lord Granville has been congratulated on the recent victory by the Governments of Italy and of Russia; and by the Ambassadors of Germany, of Austria, and of France; and by the Minister of Spain.

EGYPT—LADY STRANGFORD'S CAIRO HOSPITAL.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, On what grounds His Highness the Khedive has been advised to withdraw his support from Lady Strangford's hospital at Cairo; whether that hospital has not been exceedingly useful both to the Native and European population; whether it was established under the direction of British medical officers, with a staff of British nurses, at the request of and under the protection of His Highness; and, whether it has proved itself more valuable than the Native hospitals?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have no information on this subject, which is entirely within the competence of the Egyptian Government; but I have no objection to sending a copy of the right hon. and gallant Member's Question privately to Sir Evelyn Baring.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—THE PAPERS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Why the Papers regarding Egypt recently presented to Parliament contain no information regarding the Legislative Assembly and other so-called autonomous institutions; and whether any information on that subject will be presented; and, whether it is true, as stated by the correspondent of *The Standard*, that, though the Legislative Assembly unanimously introduced an amendment in a Municipalities Bill of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, the Bill is to be forthwith promulgated in its original form on the ground that the Assembly has only a consultative voice?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: During the period covered by the last Blue Book there were no despatches regarding the Legislative Assembly and autonomous institutions. I am not aware whether the facts are as stated in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question; but the next mail will probably contain information on the subject.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—STORAGE OF PRIVATE BILLS.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the First Commissioner of Works, What accommodation he proposes to afford for the doorkeeper's office for the storage of Private Bills for the use of Members, now occupying one of the Grand Committee Rooms?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Arrangements will be made for the distribution of Private Bills in the Vote Office instead of by the doorkeeper.

POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—THE HOLBORN WORKHOUSE—INSPECTOR HEDLEY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to a Letter from the Guardians of the Holborn Union, intimating that it is the intention of that Board to withdraw from the inquiry they have demanded into the conduct of Mr. Stanton, the Master of their Workhouse, if the Department insist (as has been officially communicated) on remitting such inquiry to Mr. Hedley, one of the Metropolitan Inspectors, alleging, as their reason, their distrust of Mr. Hedley's impartiality; whether, having regard to Mr. Robert Hedley's action at the official inquiry into the conduct of Mr. J. D. Bliss, Master of the Westminster Workhouse, Poland Street, whereby Mr. Bliss was, and is, retained in his office, the Department intends to intrust the inquiry to Mr. Hedley; and, whether it be not within the competence of the Local Government Board to appoint some other inspector to conduct such official inquiry in his place?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Mr. Hedley has for many years been an Inspector of the Board; and I am glad to have this opportunity of saying that he is an officer in whom the Board have the fullest confidence, and they have never had the slightest ground for doubting his impartiality in the inquiries which he has conducted on their behalf. I much regret to say that since the instructions were given for the inquiry in the Holborn case Mr. Hedley has received intelligence of the sudden death of his son. In consequence of this, and not on the ground suggested, it has become necessary for the Board to arrange for the inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Stanton, the Master of the Holborn Workhouse, being held by one of Mr. Hedley's colleagues.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (IRELAND) —NATIONAL BOARD SCHOOLHOUSES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, By whom, and at whose cost, the Irish National Board Schoolhouses are, or should be, whitewashed and kept in good order and repair?

Mr. TREVELYAN: In the case of vested schools, this should be seen to by the persons in whom the schools are vested—whether the Commissioners of National Education or others. If the schools are not vested, the duty devolves upon the managers.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—JOSEPH MURRAY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a man named Joseph Murray, identified in the sworn informations of two witnesses as having been one of the party who wounded persons recently by revolver shots at Ballymote, and as having had a revolver in his hand on the occasion, has yet been made amenable; and, if not, what is the reason; and, whether the man will be arrested?

Mr. TREVELYAN: As soon as the depositions were submitted to the Attorney General, and he became aware of their contents as they affected Joseph Murray, he directed that the man should be summoned for aiding and abetting in the riot at Ballymote, and the Constabulary were instructed accordingly.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEC. 14—DOMICILIARY VISITS BY THE POLICE.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that, in the absence of the members of No. 1 Barrack Street Temperance Society, in the city of Cork, their rooms were lately entered by a sergeant of police, who made inquiries of a female found in charge as to the names and characters of the members; whether he is aware that the society has been a regularly organised friendly benefit society for over forty years; and, whether the visit was in the nature of an ordinary police duty for the detection and suppression of crime?

Mr. TREVELYAN: On two occasions constables presented themselves for admission at a house in Barrack Street, where meetings were held under the guise of "Penny Readings." They were prepared to pay for admission, but were not admitted. They did not enter the rooms of the Temperance Society, or make inquiries of a female found in charge as to the names and characters of the members. On a third occasion a sergeant attended and was admitted to the entertainment. These visits were paid in the ordinary discharge of police duty. The police had good reason to pay them. With regard to the Barrack Street Temperance Society having been a regularly organized friendly benefit society for the last 40 years, the Registrar of Friendly Societies informs me that the society which was registered at that place ceased to make any communication to him 10 years ago, and is marked in his books as "broken up."

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. J. GREER, CROWN SOLICITOR FOR ANTRIM.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether James Greer, of Coneywarren, Omagh, who, as a magistrate of Tyrone, attached his name to a public document offering Lord Rossmore hearty thanks for his conduct at Rosslea, and declaring that the Commissioners of the Great Seal had no valid justification for removing Lord Rossmore from the Commission of the Peace, is the same person who holds the office of Crown Solicitor for the county Antrim; and, if so, what notice will be taken of his conduct?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Mr. Greer referred to is the Crown Solicitor for Antrim. The Government highly disapprove of his conduct in having signed the declaration offering his hearty thanks to Lord Rossmore for his conduct at Rosslea. He has, however, expressed his regret that he did so, states that he acted hastily, and promises to avoid any such misconduct in future. His Excellency has decided to accept this apology and take no further steps in the matter.

JAMAICA—RIO COBRE IRRIGATION WORKS.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to that part of the Report of the Royal Commissioners on Jamaica which states that the Rio Cobre Irrigation Works, recently constructed at an actual cost of £150,000, may, under certain probable contingencies, have to be abandoned altogether, and also as to the Ewarton Railway Extension Scheme, estimated to cost £263,000, On whose recommendation were the said works undertaken, whether they were sanctioned by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and, whether, before so sanctioning them, he had required and received the usual plans and estimates of the probable cost of the works, and of their probable returns; and, if he will lay upon the Table of the House copies of all such documents as are now in the Colonial Office?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The total capital cost of the Rio Cobre works was about £133,000. They were undertaken on the recommendation of Sir J. P. Grant, when Governor of Jamaica, and the original scheme was sanctioned by the Secretary of State. He received apparently careful Estimates and plans, and a return of 5 per cent was anticipated by the Governor on the original Estimate, which, however, was largely exceeded by purchase of land, deviations, and extraordinary accidents by floods. The Commissioners, in their Report, point out that the low return on the outlay is greatly due to the neglect of the occupiers to avail themselves of the water, and they only contemplate the abandonment of the works in case of some great accident, which would necessitate a new loan. This, I hope, is not a probable contingency. The Ewarton Railway was also sanctioned by the Secretary of State on the recommendation of the Government of Jamaica, after reference to the consulting engineers, Messrs. Hawkshaw. I think it undesirable to produce Papers respecting the details of public works in a Colony unless there has been some serious controversy on the subject calling for the interference of Parliament.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE MILITARY EXPEDITION — MACHINE GUNS.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Marine Artillery Force despatched from the Mediterranean Fleet to Suakin were supplied with any machine guns, or other light ordnance, as part of its equipment?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Machine guns and light ordnance were landed at Trinkitat. We do not know what number were supplied from the Mediterranean Fleet.

STATE OF IRELAND—IRISH EMIGRATION—STATISTICS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed in the Emigration Statistics, just furnished to the House, that the number of emigrants who left Ireland in 1883 was 108,916, or 21 per thousand of the population, being an increase of 19,000 on the number of emigrants in 1882, and of 30,000 as compared with 1881, and that the total number of emigrants who left Irish ports since 1832 is 2,913,000; whether he has observed, from the Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom, that the cultivated area of Ireland has decreased by 562,328 acres since 1875, while the number of cattle in the country has decreased, within the same period, by 125,158, and of sheep by 1,176,665; whether, in view of the declaration in the Speech from the Throne, that "Ireland continues to exhibit signs of substantial improvement," any explanation can be offered of these figures; and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to propose any further plan for subsidizing emigration from Ireland?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member takes his figures from Papers which have been laid before this House, and I have no reason to doubt the general accuracy of his quotations. But there are matters of detail which must be considered. With regard to the decrease in the "cultivated area" in 1882, as compared with 1875, it is pointed out in the Agricultural Statistics for 1877 that it is believed that, owing to an alteration in the form of the Return, mountain land, uncultivated but having some live stock, which in 1876 and former years was in many instances included under the heading "grass," was in 1877 and subsequent years entered as "barren mountain." It is very true that cattle and sheep decreased between 1875 and 1882; but in both cases 1883 showed a considerable increase as compared with 1882. In the case of cattle, the increase may be partially due to the difficulties of exportation, owing to cattle disease. I explained in debate the points in which the Government considered the allusions in the Queen's Speech to the state of Ireland to be justified. I have no announcement to make about the intentions of the Government with regard to the state of Ireland as regards emigration.

INDIA—THE SALT TAX.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If his attention has been called to paragraph 4 of the Petition presented at Cuddapah, Madras, last month, to Lord Ripon, by the Native population, which states that the recent

> "Reduction of the salt tax is not sufficient; that salt is still beyond the reach of the poor ryot and his cattle; that the use of salt for food is now considered among the poorer classes as a luxury to be enjoyed by the rich alone;"

and, whether anything can be done to relieve the suffering represented in this appeal to the Viceroy?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I have read, in *The Madras Weekly Mail*, the Memorial referred to; but I am not able to say what reply has been given to it by the Viceroy. The price of salt at Cuddapah, in December, 1883, was 17·2 seers, or about 35 lb., the rupee. In December, 1873, it was 19·8 seers, or about 33½ lb., showing that salt is now cheaper than it was 10 years ago.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS.

Mr. COMPTON LAWRANCE asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the complaints of the managers and teachers of schools in South Lincolnshire have been considered by the Education Department; and, whether any action has been taken in the matter?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The complaints referred to by the hon. Gentleman have been considered by the Education Department, and the senior Inspector of the Division has investigated them on the spot. Many of the complaints were undoubtedly justified, and the senior Inspector has made recommendations to the Department which, we trust, will remedy any injustice that has been done. We are satisfied that, with reasonable tact and discretion, such difficulties ought not to arise, and we are taking measures to prevent their recurrence.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PUNISHMENTS IN BOARD SCHOOLS—THE BOARD SCHOOL AT KIDLINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is true that, on the occasion of the recent Sunday School Treat of the United Methodist Free Church, at Kidlington, the scholars who absented themselves half a day from the National Schools for the purpose of attending the treat, were, on the following day, first flogged, and then doomed to forfeit, for ten consecutive days, the usual fifteen minutes' recreation allowed during school hours; whether it is true that they absented themselves, on the occasion named, with the consent of their parents, in consequence of obstacles being put in their way of leaving school on similar former occasions in time to attend the treat; whether it is true that there are no other elementary schools in the district except the National Schools; whether, on the recent occasion of the annual dinner of the Kidlington Conservative Association, the school attendance was suspended for one half day; whether, on the following morning, when the children assembled at school at the usual hour, that the infants' department of the school was unfit for occupation, and that they were kept in the school yard until dinner time in very stormy weather, and were then sent home very wet, and told that they need not come again that afternoon; whether, after this loss of a day and a half's attendance at school, on the occasion of the dinner, the children were entered on the books as having been present; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case?

MR. MUNDELLA: On the 25th ultimo I received a letter signed by two ministers and three circuit stewards of the Methodist Free Church, Oxford Circuit, setting forth the complaints embodied in the hon. Member's Question. I immediately called on the managers of the school for their explanation. An explanatory letter has been received from the Vicar of Kidlington, admitting that the children in the boys' and girls' departments who absented themselves for the purpose of attending the Sunday School treat were punished by a stroke on the hand with a cane next morning. It is also admitted that the school was closed on the afternoon of the 31st of January, and I understand that the banquet of the Conservative Association took place in the school-room on that day. It is further admitted that on the next morning the school was unfit for occupation, and the infants were allowed to remain in the yard during the whole morning under the charge of a monitor; also the register was marked. It appears that no inquiry was made as to whether the children who were punished were absent by direction of their parents; and it is obvious they ought not to have been punished for obeying parental authority. The closing of a public elementary school at a time or for a purpose which interferes with the instruction of the children is contrary to the regulations of the Department. And the marking of the registers and the keeping of an infant class in an open yard without shelter on a February morning are altogether indefensible. The managers of the school state that they were not consulted in any of the matters complained of; but that the teachers acted on their own responsibility throughout. We have, therefore, thought it right to warn the managers that any repetition of these offences will involve serious consequences to the teachers, and endanger the continuance of the annual grant to the school.

THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD—THE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS.

MR. COCHRAN-PATRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, If retired Subaltern Officers are eligible for appointment to Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms; and, if so, whether the Government would consider the advisability of limiting the election to retired Field Officers, of whom there are at present about forty on the Captain's private list, and many more on the Commander in Chief's list of candidates, all of whom have seen service, and many of them distinguished service, in the field, and whose claims to serve near Her Majesty's person would seem to be superior to those of Subaltern Officers?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Under the Regulations approved by Her Majesty in 1862 for appointments to the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, the private gentlemen of the Corps must be, or have been, Captains or Subalterns in the British Army, Indian Forces, or Royal Marines. The Corps of Gentlemen at Arms forms part of the Royal Household, over which the Secretary of State for War has no jurisdiction.

ARMY—THE 1ST ROYAL DRAGOONS—CATHOLIC NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the fact that no Catholic Non-Commissioned Officers have been appointed to the 1st Royal Dragoons since the present Commanding Officer took charge of the regiment in 1881; if there is now only one Catholic Non-Commissioned Officer in the regiment, and that he is passed over, time after time, while others are promoted; how many Catholics are there in the regiment; if it is the case that two privates were recently recommended for promotion by the captain of the troop, but that the one who was a Catholic was not appointed; whether both were recommended by the same Troop Officer, and were equally qualified; whether other Catholic troopers have several times been recommended for promotion, and have been passed over; and, if he is aware that a strong feeling prevails amongst the Catholic soldiers of the regiment on the subject?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Before the noble Marquess answers the Question, I wish to ask him whether he will consider the expediency, in the public interest generally, of answering Questions of this nature, especially containing such paragraphs as the last?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: As the statements are put in the form of a Question, it would be very misleading if the real facts were not stated, particularly as the Questions are on the Paper. It is not a fact that no Catholic Non-Commissioned Officers have been appointed in the 1st Royal Dragoons since the present Commanding Officer took charge of the Regiment. There are two Catholic Non-Commissioned Officers. One of them has been passed over as unfit for promotion unless he improves in his duties. Out of a total strength of 549 there are 45 Roman Catholics in the regiment, of whom 35 have joined within the last 18 months. Two privates were recently recommended for promotion by the Captain of a Troop. One was Catholic, the other Protestant. There was but one promotion made, and that fell to the Protestant, by the Captain's advice, as the better educated man of the two. All such promotions are made for merit without any reference to religion, and the Commanding Officer does not believe that any ill-feeling prevails on the subject.

Mr. HEALY: On the first opportunity on the Army Estimates I shall call attention to the persecution of Catholics in the 1st Royal Dragoons; to the persistent attempts of the Commanding Officer, before the recent War Regulations, to exclude Catholic recruits; and to the manner in which they are treated under the present Regulations.

ARMY—THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT—CAPTAIN HALDANE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that Captain Haldane, whilst lately serving in the North Staffordshire Regiment, was under arrest on charges in connection with the falsification of accounts and the misappropriation of a considerable sum of money; whether a compromise was entered into by which Captain Haldane was made to resign his Commission, receiving a gratuity from the State, from which the amount fraudulently misappropriated was guaranteed to be paid; whether Captain Haldane has recently retired, and has received from the State £1,200, out of which the sum misapplied by him has been deducted; and, whether the Government were in possession of all the facts of the case previous to their sanctioning Captain Haldane's retirement; or, if not, whether a searching inquiry will be instituted with the view of ascertaining the responsible parties?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, Captain Haldane was put under arrest by the Commanding Officer in consequence of irregularities in the accounts. Subsequently, however, the public accounts were found to be correct; but there was a deficiency in his account as President of the Regimental Committee. There was no evidence of intentional fraud, and Captain Haldane was permitted to retire with the gratuity to which he was entitled. He asked that the sum of which the account was deficient should be taken out of the sum due to him. The War Office was in possession of all the necessary facts, and no further proceedings were contemplated.

ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT—QUARTERMASTERS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that, by recent Regulations re-constituting the Army Pay Department, Quartermasters are excluded from employment therein; whether, for the information of the House, a list can be produced of Paymasters promoted during the present century from among the Quartermasters, with full information as to the manner in which these Officers acquitted themselves in the higher grade; on what account, and under what circumstances, such of them as are not now serving quitted the Service; and, how many of them are still serving; whether a similar list, for comparison, can be furnished of all Paymasters promoted from among other classes within the same period; whether it is true that a deduction of £10 for each year under the qualifying period that a Quartermaster fails to serve is made from his pension, but whether any increase whatever is accorded for any number of years' service rendered by him over and above the qualifying period; whether it is true that, by Regulation, a Quartermaster is subject to periodical retirement at the discretion of his Commanding Officer, the former being ignorant of the cause, and without a chance of remonstrance, and whether this Regulation is applied to any other class of Officer; and, whether by the power thus confided in a Commanding Officer, he may refrain from recommending a Quartermaster for a continuance in the Service, and thus, by silence, work his professional ruin?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The exclusion of Quartermasters from the Army Pay Department is not the result of recent Regulations, as they have never been eligible for appointment in it since the Department was formed. The information asked for as to Paymasters would involve a complete history of every Paymaster appointed during the last 83 years. Even if the materials for such a vast record were accessible, and if a Return of so personal a character were desirable, as to both which points there is great doubt, I have no surplus staff of clerks who could devote their time to such a Return. As regards the pensions of Quartermasters, a maximum retirement is fixed for the rank attainable after certain service; and if a Quartermaster retire with less service a deduction is made. The rule is not peculiar to Quartermasters. The continuance of a Quartermaster in the Service after the expiry of periods of 10, 15, and 20 years' service respectively as Quartermaster depends on his being recommended for such continuance by his commanding officer.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN) — THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE — THE MARINES.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, when telegraphing to the General Commanding in Egypt, on the 12th ultimo, relative to a Force to be collected at Suakin, the Adjutant General was aware of the exact strength and composition of the "Battalion of Marines" to which that telegram refers; and, if so, whether the Staff and the proportions of Field and Company Officers to Men was the same for this Battalion of Marines as that laid down for a Battalion of the Line taking the Field?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Adjutant General was not aware of the exact strength and composition of the Battalion of Marines which would be despatched from the Fleet in the Mediterranean to Suakin; but Lord Wolseley had been informed by the Admiralty that 500 Marines, with a due proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers, would be sent from home to the Fleet; and he assumed that about a corresponding body would be sent on to the Red Sea, as complete in officers and non-commissioned officers as circumstances would allow.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN CATTLE.

Mr. DUCKHAM asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been directed to the announcements, which from time to time have appeared, of the large number of cattle destined for British ports which have been thrown overboard during stress of weather, as was recently the case with nearly the whole cargo on board the *Sidonia*, from Boston to Liverpool; and, whether any record is kept by the Board of Trade of these losses; and, if not, whether there is any objection to keep such a record in future?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that for some years past the Surveyors of the Board of Trade had reported, in accordance with their instructions, any cases of cattle and sheep being thrown overboard on the Atlantic passage. In the case of the *Sidonia*, 66 out of 70 bullocks perished from stress of weather, and the circumstances were reported. The Reports were kept in the Department; and, if considered important, copies were forwarded to the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council Office.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN) — RELIEF OF KASSALA.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the fact that Kassala is a flourishing commercial centre of over 20,000 inhabitants, among whom are several thousand

Egyptians, Her Majesty's Ministers intend to persist in withdrawing the only organised government and means of defence from the town and district; and, if so, what they propose to do for the future subsistence of the 6,000 or 8,000 people who will have to be removed to Lower Egypt?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is no alteration in the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Soudan. I am not aware that it will be necessary to provide for the subsistence of 8,000 people if the Egyptian Government withdraws from Kassala.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can the noble Lord state the ground on which he bases his conclusion that it will not be necessary for a large number of people to be removed from Lower Egypt?

[No reply was given.]

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. ACLAND asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will, at the earliest possible date, consistently with the progress of public Business, propose to the House further amendments of the procedure of the House, with the object of diminishing the loss of time at present caused by the practice of reading out Notice of Questions in the House, and by the excessive number of Questions, the answers to many of which it might not be essential that they should be given by Ministers in their places in the House?

Mr. ONSLOW: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I have another to ask him on the same subject. It is this—Whether, in order to save the time of the House, he could not prevail upon Members of the Government to give their answers to Questions in plain and straightforward language, and not in long, circumlocutory, and complex speeches?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no answer to give to the last Question which has just been put. With respect to the Question of my hon. Friend, it is an indication of a desire very extensively and very naturally felt, and I must say quite justified by the position in which we still find ourselves with regard to the Business of the House. But I am very doubtful whether advantage would be gained by opening up a single point of procedure; and I think the subject must wait until it can be considered upon a larger scale, the Question being one not by any means as easy of solution as it may at first sight appear to be. No doubt I should say that in 99 cases out of 100 it would be much better if Notices of the Questions were not given at such length; but there are cases in which it is not improper that Notice should be given, and which may even require that Notice should be given.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON AND ZEBEHR PASHA.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to a telegram from Khartoum, in which it was stated that—

> "Zebehr Pasha is now admitted to be the only man connected with the Soudan who is endowed with the ability and firmness necessary to head any Government there;"

whether it is intended to intrust to Zebehr Pasha, notorious as the chief of an army of slave drivers, the Government of Khartoum after General Gordon leaves that town; and, whether such an arrangement would be in accordance with the Convention between England and Egypt for the abolition of the Slave Trade in the Soudan?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think it will be the feeling of the House that prospective and more or less speculative Questions should not be put with regard to the mission of General Gordon, and the plans which may be ascribed to him. I confess I find in the passage quoted by the hon. Gentleman nothing beyond the expression of an opinion entertained by the correspondent of a newspaper as to the state of opinion which he thinks to prevail with regard to a particular person in Khartoum; and, therefore, I think the hon. Gentleman will not expect me to go into it, more especially as it raises a question upon which no intention has been formed and no decision taken by Her Majesty's Government.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he had not alluded to anything said by General Gordon, but had simply quoted the words of a correspondent at Khartoum; and he wished to know whether the words he had quoted were not those of *The Times* Correspondent at Khartoum, who, as he was informed, was Her Majesty's Consul in that town?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have no Consul at Khartoum. [Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Consular Agent then.] A Consular Agent and a Consul are by no means the same person.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called to a statement contained in this morning's newspapers that women and children of the garrison at Sinkat had been sold by Osman Digna into slavery; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman would send instructions to take immediate steps in any possible way to obtain the release of these unfortunate people?

MR. GLADSTONE: Her Majesty's Government have no information on the subject.

SUEZ CANAL COMPANY — ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN M. DE LESSEPS AND EASTERN TRADE SHIPOWNERS' ASSOCIATION.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the assent given by Her Majesty's Government to the arrangements in respect of the Suez Canal, arrived at between M. de Lesseps and the Representatives of certain large Shipowning Companies is final and conclusive; and, whether it is still competent for Her Majesty's Government at any time to re-open the question either with respect to the dimensions, regulation, and administration of the Canal, or the tariff of rates charged for the transit?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has asked me to answer this Question. Her Majesty's Government, both in their capacity as having the general charge of the interests of this country and as the largest shareholder in the Canal Company, consider the agreement with the Association as a satisfactory solution of the differences which have arisen between the Company and their customers. Of course, Her Majesty's Government cannot affirm that further questions may not possibly hereafter arise as to the dimensions of the Canal or as to its working; but they have no reason to anticipate any difficulties in this respect. Should any such question arise requiring their consideration, it will be for Her Majesty's Government to give it due attention.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman how far the circumstance of Lord Granville having given his assent to this arrangement on the 15th of January was consistent with the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in August last, given in answer to a Question put by the right hon. Baronet at the head of the Opposition, when he said that it might be taken for granted that in any arrangement which was made the interests of this country and the authority of Parliament would be carefully borne in mind? I wish to know how he can reconcile those words with the fact that on the 15th of January, or nearly a month before Parliament met, Lord Granville sanctioned this arrangement?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I think a Question of that kind, which the hon. Member evidently had in his pocket, and with a copy of *Hansard* in his hand, might well have been put on the Paper. As the Question has been put, I do not wish that any misconception should arise; and I will say this—that what Lord Granville said last year was, that no agreement should be made with the Canal Company without its being laid before Parliament, or words to that effect. What has happened is that an arrangement has been made between the Canal Company and an Association of Shipowners; and all that Her Majesty's Government have said is that they deem that a satisfactory and wise arrangement.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: It was not Lord Granville, but the Prime Minister, who made use of the words I have quoted. I read them from *Hansard*, because I anticipated a shuffling answer from the Government. ["Oh, oh!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must say that the last expression of the hon. Member is scarcely Parliamentary.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Then, Sir, I beg to withdraw the word "shuffling."

MR. BOURKE: Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will state to the House whether or not it is a fact that when the agreement between the shipowners and M. de Lesseps was made, M. de Lesseps refused to sanction that agreement until it had been sent to Her Majesty's Government?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have no knowledge of that matter; but if the right hon. Gentleman will address a Question on the subject to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I have no doubt he will get an answer.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the statement made by the Right honourable Gentleman, on the occasion of the withdrawal of the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill in July last, to the effect that if the Government had charge of affairs an early opportunity would be given to the House next Session of coming to a judgment on the measure, he is now able to say when it is likely that opportunity will be afforded?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the Government had not yet been able to fix a day for the second reading of this Bill; nor was he at present in a position to do so, owing to the state of Business. Immediately after the debate upon the second reading of the Representation of the People Bill he should hope to be able to answer the Question.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUTHERN SOUDAN)—MR. LUPTON.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the permission of the House to make a personal explanation. On Monday last he put a Question in which he made allusion to the slaughter of 500 of the Mahdi's troops by Slaten Bey, and at the same time he introduced the name of Mr. Frank Lupton, whom he imagined was connected with Slaten Bey. He had since found that Mr. Lupton was in no way responsible, and he hastened to make this explanation.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL.

In reply to Mr. CHAPLIN,

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill was unfortunately blocked, and he had not heard whether the suggestion he had ventured to make in the general interest could be complied with or not. He could not say whether the second reading would be taken to-night; and with regard to the further stages, he could not make any answer.

SUPPLY—SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

MR. RAIKES: I beg to give Notice that I shall to-morrow ask the Prime Minister, Whether he can state what precedents exist during the last 30 years for the submission to the House of the credits of extraordinary military expenditure for special expeditions among the ordinary Supplementary Estimates; and whether it is not the fact that the Votes obtained from the House for the Kaffir War in 1851-52; the Crimean War in 1856; the China War in 1860-62; the Abyssinian Expedition; the Russo-Turkish War, the Ashantee War, the South African War, and the last Mediterranean Expedition to Egypt, were not in every case brought forward on an Address from the Crown, or as Votes of Credit, and were not in any case discussed as Supplemental Estimates?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Although the right hon. Gentleman only gives Notice of that Question, I am in a position to answer it at once, especially as it may have some influence on the debate that probably will take place to-day. In 1880 the Public Accounts Committee pointed out that Supplementary Estimates had been taken by the late Government for the pay of Indian troops at Malta to the extent of £350,000, and expenditure on account of the anticipated difficulties with Russia to the extent of £1,845,000. The Public Accounts Committee say that these Supplementary Estimates may be taken to have been the first of the kind, as a few years ago a Vote of Credit would have been taken in each of these cases; and the Committee, therefore, inquired somewhat fully into the comparative advantages of Supplementary Estimates for special Services and Votes of Credit, with a view to ascertain in what way the greatest amount of information and control with respect to the expenditure for such Services can be secured to the Treasury and Parliament. The Committee arrived at the opinion that in all cases of special service, when the Department can make a fairly definite Estimate of the service and of the general heads under which the proposed expenditure will mainly fall, it is desirable that a Supplementary Estimate should be presented, as in the case of the Native Indian troops at Malta, and that Votes of Credit should, as a rule, be only resorted to when, from the nature of the services to be performed, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to give any fairly approximate Estimate of the amount required, and when, consequently, the attempt to do so would be practically useless and even misleading. In accordance with that recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee subsequent Estimates have been on more than one occasion framed on this principle.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I would ask whether the Report of the Committee was not made before the adoption of the New Rule for preventing Motions coming on when Supply stands first?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Very possibly, although the New Rule is only a revival of a former one. When, however, the present Rule was made there was no allusion in debate to its effect on this practice.

MR. RAIKES: I did not ask the Question to-day; but it having been answered, I would further ask why the Government did not act upon the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee with regard to the Expedition to Egypt in 1882?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Although it was earlier in the year, and it was less easy to make an Estimate of the probable expenditure, yet that course was adopted in the Autumn Session of 1882, and the Supplementary Estimates were brought down and voted in the following February.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN) —ALLEGED PROCLAMATION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL rose to put a Question to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs without Notice, which he supposed he would be anxious to answer at once. As some people were ready to believe anything, he wished to know, Whether there was any truth in the statement contained in a telegram that had appeared in a newspaper of that morning, that a Proclamation had been jointly issued by Admiral Hewett and General Graham, in which they asked the Sheikhs to come in and meet them at Suakin? The alleged Proclamation stated—

> "You have already been warned that the English Forces have come here, not only to relieve the garrison of Tokar, but to redress the wrongs under which you have so long suffered; nevertheless, you have gone on trusting that notorious scoundrel, Osman Digna, well known to you as a bad man, his former life in Suakin having proved that to be the case. He has led you away with the foolish idea that the Mahdi has come on earth."

After some theological references, the alleged Proclamation went on to say—

> "Your people are brave, and England always respects such men. Awake, then, chase Osman Digna from your country. We promise you that protection and pardon shall be granted to all who come in at once, otherwise the fate of those who fell at El Teb shall surely overtake you."

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am afraid that I shall disappoint my hon. Friend when I say that I think Notice ought to be given of the Question. I may further point out to him that the Question ought not, I think, properly to be addressed to the Foreign Office. I understand it to apply to the War Office and the Admiralty.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that to-morrow I shall put the same Question to the Secretary of State for War.

THE IRISH LAND QUESTION—SPEECH OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that on Monday I will ask the Prime Minister, Whether, as the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has charged the Irish Members with keeping up agitation on the Land Question in Ireland, his attention has been called to the speeches of his own Solicitor General on the same subject when he was a candidate for county Londonderry; and, whether the then Mr. Walker spoke on behalf of the Government when uttering the following words:—

> "There is another feature of the Land Act. It is a question whether there are not defects which still require to be remedied. When I speak of the defects of the Land Act I speak the sentiments of my own mind. I am not

ashamed to express those sentiments, formed, as they have been, from my experience of the working of the Act? I would ask, was it reasonable that leaseholders should not have been included in that Act. I never could see it. What have been the leases since 1870? What benefit did they confer upon the leaseholder? I say the only benefit they conferred on him was a shadow of security of tenure, with, in almost every case, an increase of rent, because of the lease being given to the tenant with a trifle of compensation for disturbance at the end of the lease and saddled with the most onerous and burdensome conditions. The day when the Land Act of 1881 became law the leaseholder passed into a far worse position than his brother farmer who was a tenant from year to year. When the lease falls out the difficulty must be met by legislation."

I will also ask, whether Mr. Walker used this expression with regard to the Improvement Clause—

"I believe that clause will be rightly amended by not allowing the landlord any participation in the tenant's improvements, and that the right course would be that the tenant should enjoy untouched his own industry and the result of his own unaided capital expended on the land, and that the landlord should have no share in that which he did not create."

Also, whether Mr. Walker used these words—

"Another matter occurring to my mind is this. Is there really in all cases under the Land Act free sale? I believe there is not. Whether in Ulster you sell under local custom or out of Ulster you sell under the clauses of the Land Act the sale is restricted in a manner it ought not to be. I cannot see why the sale should not be in the open market."

I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the charges which have been made against us by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, any rebuke has been conveyed to the Solicitor General for Ireland; and, if not, whether the Government approve of the sentiments which he expressed at Coleraine on the 22nd of December, and which are reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 24th of December, 1883?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I may, perhaps, be permitted to say that I enter my protest against the use of the word "charge" in the Question of which the hon. Member has given Notice. I stated what had passed, and what was passing, in Ireland; and I referred to Members on both sides of the House; but I do not think I used a single word in my speech of yesterday reflecting upon any hon. Member.

Mr. MAC IVER: I should like to ask whether such language as that quoted, if now used by any Parliamentary candidate, would not be an offence under the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act?

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY — ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think that, in moving the Military Estimates, it may be convenient that I should make a short statement strictly confined to the principal matter to which these Supplementary Estimates apply. If any further explanation is required it will be in my power, as well as in that of any other Member of the Government, to address the Committee again. It may be assumed that the principal object of discussion will be the item of £100,000 for the expenses of the Military Expendition to Tokar. This Military Expedition was, as the Committee are aware, undertaken after the defeat of Baker Pasha, primarily for the relief of the garrison of Tokar, but also with the object of providing for the security of the Port of Suakin. Her Majesty's Government, in advising the Egyptian Government, and in assisting the Egyptian Government to evacuate the interior of the Soudan, have undertaken the protection of the Red Sea ports, and especially the Port of Suakin. That port was, and had been for some time, threatened by bodies of the insurgent tribes; and after the defeat of Baker Pasha's force the danger of Suakin was greatly increased, it being not only threatened but actually attacked and fired upon by small parties of Arabs. After the defeat of Baker Pasha, the fall of Sinkat, and the surrender of Tokar, the Port of Suakin was menaced by two very considerable bodies of warlike and victorious tribes, who occupied positions surrounding Suakin and directly threatening the place. These bodies had announced their intention, directly they had disposed of the Egyptian garrisons, to take Suakin and to drive the British Force into the sea. I altogether deny the truth of the assertion which has been made in this House, in the course of the different irregular discussions on this question which have already taken place, that the advance of General Graham from Trinkitat to Tokar was an unnecessary and an unprovoked advance. In the first place, General Graham had received no accurate or authentic account of what had taken place at Tokar; and, indeed, it was not until after the battle of El Teb, and until he had advanced to Tokar itself, that he learnt for the first time accurately what had taken place in reference to the surrender. Until then he did not know but what he might find some portion of the Egyptian garrison holding their own in Tokar. Therefore, it became absolutely impossible for General Graham, charged with the commission with which he was charged, to have returned to Suakin on receipt of information which, however probable it might have appeared to him, was not certain information; and he would not have been justified in abandoning the advance upon Tokar, or the mission upon which he had been despatched. But even if General Graham had been aware with certainty that Tokar had fallen, I should still maintain that he could not have discharged the whole of the mission upon which he was sent—namely, the effectual protection of the Port of Suakin, without making the advance which he did make, or without fighting the battle he did fight. The force which General Graham found in position at El Teb was encamped not very distant from, but directly threatening, Suakin. Therefore, if that port was to be satisfactorily defended, and if a large British Force was not to be permanently shut up in the place for the purpose of protecting it, it was absolutely necessary that General Graham should not retire in the face of a victorious force in such a position, but that he should take efficient measures to defeat and disperse it upon the spot where it was encamped; or it was inevitable that he would find, on his retirement from Trinkitat to Suakin, that it would have followed him and offered him battle, and he might have been compelled to fight under circumstances far less advantageous and less desirable for him than those under which he did actually fight. General Graham, having fought successfully the battle of El Teb, proceeded to Tokar; and having released the remains of the Egyptian force which he found there, he retired with his force to Trinkitat, and has himself returned to Suakin, and I believe that the greater part of his force will leave Trinkitat to-day. In concert with Admiral Hewett he has issued a Proclation to Osman Digna and his followers, which is the one, I believe, that has been referred to by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell). It is unnecessary that I should refer to the exact terms of that Proclamation until we have received further and more accurate information with regard to it, seeing that the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has promised to make known its terms as soon as possible.

MR. ONSLOW: No; the noble Lord said he would not give the Proclamation.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The noble Lord merely asked that Notice should be given of the hon. Gentleman's Question, referring to the actual terms of the Proclamation. Undoubtedly it is the fact that Proclamations have been issued, and that under those Proclamations Admiral Hewett and General Graham have called upon the forces under Osman Digna to disperse, and Osman Digna and his adherents have been warned that, in the event of their not so dispersing, they will be dispersed by force. I may add that reinforcements have been sent to General Graham to enable him to make that declaration good, and to take the necessary measures for the dispersal of Osman Digna's forces in the event of their not complying with the Proclamations which have been issued. General Graham has been directed not to undertake any operations at a considerable distance from Suakin. It is believed that the force under the command of Osman Digna is at a spot about 10 miles from Suakin. It appears, however, that there is in the neighbourhood a considerable number of tribes who are believed to be friendly, and others who are believed to be wavering, and who, there is every reason to believe, will be disposed to take that side which is the strongest. And although General Graham has been directed not to undertake, with the force under his command, any operations at a distance from Suakin, it is extremely probable, though, of course, we cannot speak with any certainty as to the fact, that the spontaneous dispersal of Osman Digna's force, or their forcible dispersal by General Graham and his troops, will have the effect of inducing those tribes which are either friendly or wavering to open out the Berber and Suakin route; and, if that object is accomplished, I need not say that very great aid and assistance will have been given to the mission which General Gordon is undertaking, and to the work in which he is at present engaged.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: Will the noble Marquess state what are the precise instructions which have been given to General Graham?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I cannot, at this moment, give the precise instructions; but I may state that yesterday afternoon a telegram was received from General Graham saying that he had conferred with the Admiral at Suakin, and that they proposed to issue a Proclamation calling upon Osman Digna's forces to disperse, and that they proposed to land troops at Suakin for the purpose of enforcing the Proclamation; and they recommended that, if it be necessary, the force under General Graham's command should advance upon the position occupied by Osman Digna. They say that, in their opinion, after the victory gained at El Teb, the operation would not be one that would be seriously resisted; but they think, at the same time, that it would be necessary to take every precaution. The only instructions which have been given to General Graham on the subject from home are that we approve the intentions and recommendations contained in the telegram, and of which I have given a general description. I believe, and I am prepared to maintain, that there is nothing whatever inconsistent in these operations, or in the instructions which have been given to Admiral Sir William Hewett and General Graham, with the policy which Her Majesty's Government have hitherto adopted in the Soudan, and which has been announced in this House. General Gordon's mission was one mainly for the purpose of withdrawing the Egyptian garrisons and the Egyptian officials from the interior of the Soudan, and also to make such arrangements as might be practicable for the government of the Provinces when the garrisons had been withdrawn. General Gordon has explained that the question of evacuation is so mixed up with that of the interests of the people of the Provinces that it is impossible to separate them; but the evacuation, which he still considers the right policy, must be a matter of some time, and he does not appear to have excluded the idea or the possibility of the employment of some armed force against those who resist the measures he has taken for withdrawing the garrisons and the Egyptian officials from these Provinces. We were asked, the other day, why we were engaged in war with Osman Digna, the lieutenant of the Mahdi, whom General Gordon had appointed Governor of a Province in the Soudan? I think the position of the Mahdi, and the position of Osman Digna in regard to us, are totally and entirely different. The Mahdi is not threatening any position which the British Government has undertaken to defend. The Mahdi is not, as far as we are aware, actually engaged in obstructing the measures which General Gordon has been directed to take for the evacuation of the Soudan. On the other hand, Osman Digna is not only by word, but also by deed, menacing and threatening the positions which the British Government have already announced their intention to protect, and he is still engaged in opposition to those measures, and to the peaceable withdrawal of the Egyptian garrison and officials from that portion of the Soudan. We have no intention of undertaking any operation for the purpose of punishing or taking any revenge upon Osman Digna. We have no intention of undertaking any operation for the purpose of exterminating or of making war upon his adherents, so soon as they shall cease to menace the positions which we have announced our intention to maintain and to protect. There appears also to have been, the other day, some misrepresentation in the minds of hon. Members as to our intention immediately to withdraw General Graham's force. There is, I believe, every reason to hope that within a short period General Graham's force will have accomplished the purpose for which it was sent—that is to say, the relief of what remained of the garrison of Tokar, and the effective protection of Suakin. When this is done, I should be disposed to think that the retention of a force of any magnitude, such as that at General Graham's command, will be entirely unnecessary; and probably it will be easily in the power of the Navy to provide for the security of Suakin during the short interval which may elapse before the final decision is come to as to the permanent garrison—a garrison probably of moderate dimensions—by which Suakin is to be held. I do not think that there is anything further upon which it is necessary for me, on this occasion, to detain the Committee. I am quite aware that the Vote which I am asking the Committee to grant affords an opportunity for the discussion of any question connected with the policy of the Government, either in the Soudan or in Egypt in regard to the expedition, which it may be thought desirable to debate; but I am of opinion that, considering the lengthened and numerous discussions which we have had on the subject within a very short time, it is not necessary for me, on the part of the Government, to volunteer any further exposition of our policy than that which has been already given, reserving to myself, and also, of course, to all the other Members of the Government, the power and the right to answer any further Questions which it may be desired to put to us in regard to our Egyptian policy. And I venture to hope that if it is the real object of hon. Members—which I assume it is—to obtain some clearer exposition in regard to our policy in the Soudan, it will be found that this discussion in Committee is a more convenient discussion, and a more convenient way of attaining that object than would have been a formal discussion on such a Motion as was proposed to be made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley). I beg, Sir, to move the Supplementary Estimate which has been placed in your hands.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £370,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services."

COLONEL STANLEY: If I had any doubt before as to the necessity, however reluctantly, of obtruding myself on the Committee, it would have been dispersed by the speech of the noble Marquess in moving these Estimates; for if the position was one which was unpleasant and dubious in the first instance, it becomes doubly so by the prospect opened out by the noble Marquess, that this is not the end of the warlike operations in Egypt; but that, on the contrary, so far as I can learn, the occasion, if not absolutely forced upon the Government of a further expenditure of life, and perhaps, of money, is at least not avoided by them in the slightest degree, and that an opportunity of using the force they have assembled at Suakin and Trinkitat is now to be seized for the purpose, as we are now told, of giving a further lesson to those tribes who have ventured to oppose Her Majesty's Government. Now, what is the position at the present time? We understand that the force which has been sent to Suakin and Trinkitat was assembled there with definite work to carry out, with a definite programme before them; and that upon the satisfactory conclusion of the duties that force was sent to Trinkitat to execute, it was to be withdrawn at as early a period as might be. Now, however, we learn that a Proclamation has been sent out, of which the noble Marquess did not vouchsafe to give us the terms, although, from the fact of his having answered it, they must be in his hands at the present moment. A Proclamation has been issued against Osman Digna, giving him to understand, on terms with which we are unacquainted, that unless he submits himself, or permits Her Majesty's Government to take their course, his tribes are to be dispersed by the British Forces; but that no further steps will be taken against Osman Digna's forces when they shall have ceased to be adherents of that person. It is said that there is a difference between Osman Digna and the Mahdi. The noble Marquess says there is nothing inconsistent in the operations against Osman Digna and the position we occupy in respect to the Mahdi. He says the Mahdi is not an obstruction. But will the noble Marquess venture to say that the offer made to the Mahdi, and the position in which he now stands in respect to

General Gordon, and I presume to Her Majesty's Government, is one merely of neutrality, purchased, however temporarily; or whether he is in a position in which we are likely to receive from the new Sultan of Kordofan that cordial support which Her Majesty's Government desire? That is a point upon which we should very much like to have an explanation from the noble Marquess at some future date. In the first place, may I be allowed to express my personal regret at being obliged to make use of the Forms of the House in a sense which to outsiders might imply that we, who sit on this side of the House, propose to refuse to join in that which is necessary for General Graham's gallant force? I regret also that the noble Marquess sat down without one word of approval, as far as I could gather, of the manner in which that force carried out the arduous and difficult duties with which it was charged, and, above all, without one word of praise for the gallant Commander, who has fully justified the choice made of him, and who has borne out the anticipations which all those who have the honour of his friendship might well have formed, and who has performed his duties in a way which leads us to hope that if opportunity should again arise his services will again be employed. The noble Marquess might also, I think, have spared one word in praise of the courage and endurance of the men, the bravery with which they fought a determined enemy, and the cheerfulness and goodwill with which all those very difficult operations were carried out. At least do not let it be said that the Committee are insensible to the value of such services and such operations. We have been told several times that it is not our duty to ask any Questions of the Government, either with respect to General Gordon or the Government, while operations are going on. Although I think that doctrine has been hardly pressed, and speaking for myself, I have religiously abstained from asking the noble Marquess a single Question which might hamper and impede the Government. But so far as I am able, with the indulgence of the Committee, I will endeavour to deal only with that which is public and before the House. We have been told, on more than one occasion, that the opportunity for discussing the policy of the Government would be upon the occasion when the Vote for the services rendered was proposed. But what is the reply which the Government give us? We accept their challenge. We take the earliest opportunity for placing a Motion on the Paper by which the whole of these questions can be raised; and we are met by what I cannot help characterizing as a somewhat narrow, although, it is true, an accurate construction of the Rules of Debate. We might have thought that the Government would have taken an opportunity to show, not only the Opposition, but the country, what their policy is to be in Egypt, and to what these expeditions tend. It would not have hindered, but facilitated, the progress of Business if they had given a day, or even more, for that purpose. The immediate result, in a Parliamentary and practical point of view, would have been that only one speech could in that case have been made, and one question raised; whereas many speeches can now be made, and many questions raised, on the Vote of all three Services employed in connection with the Egyptian Government. I believe that a frank and candid explanation at an early date would have done much to save them from the perpetual torment, as I well know it is, of unlimited inquiry. I hope this will be accepted as my apology for speaking at rather greater length than is customary in Committee. My feeling is very strong, and I ask the Committee to look carefully, and see whether, in all probability, under the circumstances in which we are placed, this is not likely to be only the first of many similar Estimates, unless the Government are content to take a broader view of the question than they have yet taken. If they like to live, as it were, from hand to mouth, and only ask the House to come forward when they find these expeditions necessary, and only deal with the question partially instead of dealing with it as one general question, Votes in Committee will come almost perpetually before us, and what is being done now as an exception will be a matter of common practice in the future. I venture to say that what has happened in the past, at El Teb and elsehere, is what will happen in the future at Assouan or in the vicinity of the Littoral, which, at the present time, you have not made up your minds to abandon. Let me take this opportunity of doing justice to the memory of a brave and unfortunate man—and let me ask the Committee to go back for a short time to the position in which we were placed in respect of the expedition which brought this state of things about. I do not wish to go back beyond the time when the Government first asked for a Vote for warlike operations which were not in Egypt. They told us that they went there to put down tyranny, and to promote the settlement of Egyptian affairs. Twenty months have passed, and we wished to know, and we have a right to know, how the Government have used the power at their command, how the tyranny of one person or another has been put down, and how the settlement of Egyptian affairs has been promoted? In my opinion, and in the opinion of most persons who have examined the question, if we wish to know what has led directly to the present state of affairs we must go back to the time when General Hicks was sent to Khartoum. He was engaged by the Egyptian Government, with the entire concurrence of Her Majesty's Representative. Let me here, in justice to General Hicks, correct an expression which has been used "elsewhere," that he was only a retired officer serving a Foreign Power. True, it may be, in a literal sense, that he was; but it was not so in the spirit. He was an officer who had served long in the Army, and he had entered with the full knowledge of your Representative into the service of a Power with whom you were in close alliance, and whose country, in point of fact, was lying under your military occupation. I am sorry that I shall have to trouble the Committee with one or two extracts, but they will be as few as possible, and are merely for the purpose of illustrating the case which I wish to make out. General Hicks made the campaign in Sennaar. He achieved victories, which, in Lord Dufferin's opinion, led to the complete re-establishment of the authority of the Egyptian Government, and in regard to which Lord Dufferin himself has placed his opinion on record in the despatch dated December 14, 1883. He there says, speaking of the campaign of Sennaar—

> "Had General Hicks's offensive operations terminated here, all would have been comparatively well. A deep river and a considerable tract of desert separated the liberated territory from the Mahdi's head-quarters, and breathing time had been gained for effecting the defensive operations suggested by Colonel Stewart, and for the establishment of a just and decent Administration at Khartoum and Sennaar, as well as for negotiating with some of the disaffected tribes."—[Egypt, No. 1 (1884) p. 136.]

Then he goes on to say that he was not aware of the cause which led to General Hicks's disaster and defeat. General Hicks returned to Khartoum at the end of May. He continued to telegraph to Sir Edward Malet, as he had previously done, concerning his operations; and I understand that Sir Edward Malet not only allowed, but encouraged, him to believe that in so doing he was acting for the best interests of the British and Egyptian Governments. What I want now to point out is this—that this unfortunate officer in what he did was led, I do not say by any absolute fault, but, at all events, was allowed to be led by the English Government into the position which terminated in his unfortunate defeat and disaster; for, although on the 22nd of May Sir Edward Malet had already sent a note to Cherif Pasha, in which he disclaimed responsibility on the part of Her Majesty's Government for the operations in the Soudan, or for the appointment or action of General Hicks, I believe, as a matter of fact, that this information was never communicated to General Hicks; but that, on the contrary, he rested in the belief that what he did was with the approval and knowledge of Her Majesty's Government. Surely, Sir, an officer so appointed, with the assent of the Representatives of the British Government, if the British Government intended to disown his proceedings, the only candid and straightforward course proper to take was to inform him of the fact. That course appears not to have been taken. On the contrary, it seems to be perfectly plain according to a telegram, with which I will not at this moment trouble the Committee, that General Hicks constantly and plainly asked whether Cherif Pasha's orders had been repeated, and whether steps had been taken to support him in his military arrangements. There is one point on this part of the question which I ought to mention. General Hicks, in a telegram dated June 28 to Sir Edward Malet, earnestly requests reinforcements, without which he says his presence there is of no use. After asking if Cherif Pasha had repeated his orders, and whether steps had been taken to support him, he goes on to say—

> "I must urgently request that distinct orders be sent that all directions I give, especially as regards the organization of the forces now collecting, as also for all military arrangements for and during the campaign, may be obeyed. If this is not done, my being here is of no use, and I beg to suggest that I may be recalled."—[Egypt, No. 22 (1883), p. 72.]

The telegram of the 21st of May, to which this was a reply, does not appear in the Blue Book, nor is there any information about it. But, in the absence of information to the contrary, I am justified in assuming that this was an answer to a despatch which General Hicks quoted in his private correspondence. General Hicks said that orders had been sent by Cherif Pasha to Suleiman Pasha that no military movements were to be made without his advice and assent, and that virtually he was Commander-in-Chief. That telegram must naturally have led General Hicks to believe that he was receiving the support of Her Majesty's Government through their Representative. He was not satisfied with the arrangements, and subsequently to that Suleiman Pasha was relieved of his command, the fact being reported to Lord Granville. General Hicks received from Sir Edward Malet a telegram saying that after this concession he hoped he would not press his resignation; and this General Hicks held rightly, as I imagine, to be a direct request to him, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to continue in his command. That telegram does not appear in the Blue Book; but I am informed, upon authority which I will give to the noble Marquess if he desires to have it, that it was sent. On the 18th of August General Hicks was appointed Commander-in-Chief. Lord Granville was informed of this through Sir Edward Malet, who telegraphed his congratulations, adding that the act was a spontaneous one on the part of the Egyptian Government. Sir Edward Malet said that he was debarred by his instructions from giving advice, the policy of Her Majesty's Government being to abstain, as much as possible, from interference with the action of the Egyptian Government in the Soudan. But that is not all. On the same day General Hicks received a telegram from the Khedive in cipher in English, which I also give on the same authority I have just referred to. The telegram commences—

> "It is with pleasure that I hereby appoint you Commander-in-Chief of the Soudan expedition, with the rank of Lieutenant General, and I have no doubt that your previous knowledge of the country will be of great advantage."

The Khedive's telegram then goes on to say—

> "In my opinion, without complete success in that quarter (that is, the Soudan), the work would be but half finished, and would have to be begun again. So long as that Province is not subdued there can be no lasting peace in the Soudan, and I hope that you will employ your best efforts to accomplish its reduction."

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: What is the date of the telegram?

Colonel STANLEY: I am informed that it was received on the 18th of August, and I will verify the telegram if necessary. Let any hon. Member put himself in the position of an officer so appointed, and so acting, receiving as he believed from the Representatives of Her Majesty's Government in cipher in English a message of that sort. How was it possible that an officer, under such circumstances, should not suppose that he had, if not the formal, at least the moral support of Her Majesty's Government? There is also this fact—that the cipher telegram was received almost simultaneously with one from Sir Edward Malet, congratulating him on his appointment; and although it is true that on the 22nd of May the Government had disclaimed all responsibility on account of the operations in the Soudan, they had not acquainted General Hicks with the fact, but had left him in ignorance of their action, although they requested him to push on the work to the end. No wonder he complained that the departure of Lord Dufferin, who had approved of the course he had taken, and had placed his opinion on record, was a great blow to him. From that point begins what I may call the second policy of Her Majesty's Government—that is to say, in no way giving advice to the Egyptian Government, although General Hicks was never acquainted with that fact by Her Majesty's Government. He was allowed to start on his hazardous expedition; the wise counsel of Lord

Dufferin, as appears from the Blue Book, that the expedition should be confined to Sennaar, was overlooked—by whom I do not presume to say—and General Hicks was allowed to start on the hazardous enterprize of reconquering Kordofan—an enterprize as to which he informed Sir Edward Malet, in a telegram (No. 18, page 27, of Nov. 22), that when he considered that defeat might mean, not only the loss of Darfour and of Kordofan, but also of Sennaar, and possibly of Khartoum, he thought that no risk ought to be run, and he said—" Do me the favour to submit this to the Egyptian Government." I have now endeavoured to go through this history, and I ask the Committee to pardon me if I have wearied them. I have wished to show how intimate was the connection between the Egyptian Army and the British Representative; how close it was with reference to the operations in the Soudan; and how probable by analogy that such disasters might happen again if Her Majesty's Government accepted even the limited responsibility as far as Assouan or Wady Halfa. General Hicks's despatch of the 3rd of October warned the Government of the precarious nature of his operations. He was a man of sound judgment; but his judgment was set aside and disregarded. So little do the Government appear to have understood the position in which he was placed, that actually on the 6th of September, almost on the very day that General Hicks started, they commenced negotiations for the reduction of Her Majesty's troops then in Egypt, although General Hicks was starting on this admittedly hazardous expedition, admittedly with inadequate means, and with absolutely no Reserve behind him, except Sir Evelyn Wood's Army, which was enlisted for service in Egypt Proper only. Two days before the disaster Her Majesty's Government decided to evacuate Cairo. If the Mahdi had followed up his success after the annihilation of General Hicks's Army, with such a Reserve as was seen in the hands of General Baker, and with Her Majesty's Forces withdrawn from Cairo, in what a position would Her Majesty's Government have been for the defence of Egypt Proper, their responsibility with regard to which they have never yet repudiated? It matters little whether the Government can evade, as they think, their responsibility by a disclaimer on paper. The broad fact remains, and will not be misunderstood either in this House or in the country, that Her Majesty's Government, having Egypt in their power, and the Egyptian Army really, though not nominally, in their hands, allowed General Hicks to start on his expedition, and allowed the Egyptian Government to embark in such a hazardous enterprize, and never lifted their little finger to prevent these operations. Let me turn from this, which, after all, is only a melancholy retrospect, to what is likely to be the position in regard to following out the instructions that have been given to General Gordon. If ever there was a remarkable document presented to the House it was the instructions to General Gordon and the following Papers. And do not let the noble Marquess taunt me with making an indiscreet use of these Papers. They are before the world, and free for anyone to comment upon them at his discretion. I would not willingly do anything to hamper or impede the delicate negotiations that are going on. But, still, this is a matter on which it seems to me it is perfectly fair to comment. On the 18th of January in this year, Lord Granville, in a despatch to General Gordon, says—

> " Her Majesty's Government are desirous that you should proceed at once to Egypt, to report to them on the military situation in the Soudan, and on the measures which it may be advisable to take for the security of the Egyptian garrisons still holding positions in that country, and for the safety of the European population in Khartoum. You are also desired to consider and report upon the best mode of effecting the evacuation of the interior of the Soudan, and upon the manner in which the safety and the good administration by the Egyptian Government of the ports on the sea coast can best be secured."—[Egypt, No. 2 (1884), p. 3.]

On the 26th of November, in one of the telegrams received, Tokar and Sinkat were reported to be in danger; and this despatch is almost, I think, if not quite, the earliest notification in which we see that Her Majesty's Government were in any way anxious that the security of the Egyptian garrisons should be considered. Now, Sir, General Gordon writes a very remarkable Memorandum, in which he explains clearly the position in which he stands. In his Memorandum, received February 1, he says that—

> "Her Majesty's Government have come to the irrevocable decision not to incur the very onerous duty"—

here follow words which would almost appear to be ironical if they were not in a serious Paper:—

> "Of securing to the peoples of the Soudan a just future government."—[Egypt, No. 7 (1884), p. 2.]

Her Majesty's Government have given us this leading instruction to General Gordon—that it was their irrevocable decision not to incur the onerous duty of securing the just future government of the Soudan. General Gordon is a man who, as we all know, would not be afraid of responsibility in any form; like a wise and practical man, he places on record the leading points of his expedition, and, to use his own words, keeping paragraph No. 1 in view—namely, that the evacuation of the Soudan is irrevocably decided upon, he says it will depend upon circumstances in what way that is to be accomplished. Now, let me ask the attention of the Committee for one moment to a point in the programme of General Gordon which, I think, has hitherto escaped remark. His idea is—

> "That the restoration of the country should be made to the different petty Sultans who existed at the time of Mehemet Ali's conquest, and whose families still exist; that the Mahdi should be left altogether out of the calculation as regards the handing over the country; and that it should be optional with the Sultans to accept his supremacy or not."—[*Ibid.*]

Adding, that to hand over to the Mahdi the arsenals would be a mistake. The passage to which I desire to call the attention of the Committee is that in which, after saying there will be little or no difficulty in handing over the Soudan to those who were the former Rulers of the country, he makes certain exceptions. And what are they? He says that—

> "The most difficult question is how and to whom to hand over the arsenals of Khartoum, Dongola, and Kassala."

And I agree that, although the policy of General Gordon, in pursuance of the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, is plain enough as regards the portions of the country referred to as having Rulers to whom you can hand them over, yet exception is made with reference to these three important places, with regard to which I hazard the humble opinion that they should not be given up. Whoever looks at the map will see the importance of these places for purposes both offensive or defensive in respect of the Frontier of Egypt. I do not wish to comment in detail as to the other points which may be still left in doubt. We are a little anxious to know if the handing over of Khartoum, whether it be to Zebehr or to any other person, is within the scope, as I understand it to be, of General Gordon's instructions; but that being a point, perhaps, of difficulty, I will, therefore, not touch it. I proceed on safer and sounder ground, and I ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to give the Committee some information as to what we may expect the policy of Her Majesty's Government to be in respect of the other places. There is the policy of Cherif Pasha, to which, perhaps, I should do an injustice if I did not quote it in his own words. The policy of Cherif Pasha, and the policy of the Egyptian Government, to which they adhered until Her Majesty's Government displaced them, is thus stated—

> "The first objection which presents itself to the mind in contemplating the possibility of the abandonment of the Soudan by Egypt is the Firman of the 7th August, 1879, which formally prohibits all alienation of territory on the part of the Khedive. But, even supposing Egypt to have an absolute right of giving up her possessions in the Soudan, it is right to examine what the consequences of it will be. In the actual state of affairs, the Government maintains its authority over the whole of the Soudan, excepting the Province of Kordofan and the districts in the neighbourhood of Suakin. It is a question of abandoning to the insurrection the whole of the Eastern Soudan, the Moudiriehs of Berber and Dongola, as well as the whole course of the Nile, from its source to a point to be defined as the Southern Frontier of Egypt. The False Prophet would then find himself regarded as the sole authority over these vast regions. . . . Egypt would thus have contributed to the increase of the prestige of the False Prophet. . . . Deprived of her natural frontiers, and consequently vulnerable on all sides, Egypt would be obliged, to ensure her security, to keep on foot a considerable force, and one beyond her means."—[Egypt, No. 1 (1884), pp. 145-6.]

And this, in respect of the latter portion of it, does not appear to be an overrated statement. What is the report made to Her Majesty's Government? It is to be found on page 129 of the same Blue Book, where Sir Evelyn Baring, writing on the 3rd of December, and alluding to the alternative policy of abandoning the Soudan and occupying

Egypt only as far as Assouan or Wady Halfa, as the case may be, says—

> "General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood are of opinion that, if the Egyptian Government be left to rely exclusively on its own resources, and the Mahdi advances, Khartoum must fall . . . If Khartoum is abandoned, they think that the whole of the Valley of the Nile, down to Wady Halfa or thereabouts, will probably be lost to the Egyptian Government."

He goes on to say—I have not the passage here, but I shall be in the recollection of the Committee—that the limitation of the territory of the Egyptian Government can only be regarded as an embodiment of that policy in respect of which they had placed on record that if it were adopted a heavy addition must be made to the Egyptian Army. Now, I do not know whether the Committee fully realize the extent of territory to be abandoned. The territory between Assouan and Khartoum extends over something like nine degrees, or, roughly speaking, 600 miles; and I understand that 500 miles is what may be fairly computed as its lateral dimensions. To whom is this territory to be ceded? Is it to be left outside the sphere of our policy? Are we to be indifferent while tribal warfare is continually going on; or are we to subsidize and encourage friendly tribes, and use them as a barrier? Then, with regard to the Western Frontier. It is true that either Wady Halfa or Assouan control, to a great extent, the Valley of the Nile; but the Western Frontier is a source of danger which you cannot altogether afford to disregard. Again, what position will Her Majesty's Government take with regard to the garrisons of the Littoral? Still more is the necessity of working upon these garrisons pointed to by the answer which the noble Marquess has given to-day. Are these, in the opinion of the noble Marquess, to be used only for defensive purposes—the forces being shut up at Suakin, and presumably at analogous places? If so, I ask the Committee to consider what a prospect of tribal warfare, and what a fruitful source of future Estimates, is here opened up. I ask the noble Marquess to tell the Committee whether the garrisoning of these places is to be on the same principle as was acted upon in the case of Aden? We formerly occupied Aden alone, and afterwards a small extent of country inland; but, practically, we shut ourselves off from all connection with the interior of the country, so much so that I believe officers were at one time prohibited from going any distance from the lines of the garrison. We ask, are these garrisons to be kept for defensive purposes, and for defensive purposes alone? The noble Marquess spoke of their being occupied for such time only until they can be safeguarded by the Navy, and until such further time, as I apprehend, that the defence of the garrisons can be entrusted to troops, either British, or under immediate British command. I should not be in Order if I laid any stress upon this now; but what a pleasant prospect is thus opened up for the Navy, especially if it be occupied with operations in connection with the Slave Trade; or, still more, if, as we heard the other day, by formidable hints thrown out by Ministers, they were to be occupied with a view to prevent communications between the Soudan and the head-quarters of the Slave Trade in Arabia. That, I think, is not a very lively prospect of the duties which will devolve on Her Majesty's Navy. I believe there are many creeks along the coast where, under shelter of the land, dhows can be used for the purposes of the Slave Trade. But how are these garrisons to be manned? Have the Government made up their minds upon this point? I speak not only of the littoral, but also of the interior garrisons; and I ask if they are to be manned by Imperial, Turkish, Indian, or Egyptian troops? As I understand the position, you say to the Turkish Government—"We are willing to allow you to garrison these forts at your own cost"—that is to say, you will not place any charge on that account upon the Egyptian, or, presumably, on our own, Revenue. But, if that be the ground taken up, the communications have, as I think the last Blue Book shows, fallen through. Either the Turks cannot, or will not, garrison these places, or lend troops for the purpose at their own expense. Her Majesty's Government do not, I presume, intend to pay that expense themselves; and probably they are of opinion that the Egyptian Revenues are not in a condition to bear it. Now, as regards the Indian troops. I hope there is no intention of employing them in this service, and, were there any intention of that, I should myself deprecate such a proposal. However fitted Indian troops may be for active service and for temporary employment, I believe it would be in many ways the greatest mistake we could commit to employ Indian troops at a distance, or for any length of time away from the country in which they ought to serve. Then, as to Egyptian troops. I presume that it is not contemplated that you can, at the present time, place upon them a great amount of reliance. I do not think that recent experience has shown that anyone in responsibility, or in their senses, would be justified in relying entirely upon these troops. But I think I may say, on the other hand, that it would be a mistake to go so far in the opposite direction as to condemn them altogether, or to say that at no time, and under no circumstances, can they be made valuable auxiliaries of the British Forces. Practically, it comes to this. You cannot, or you will not, employ Turkish troops; you will not employ Indian troops, and you do not like to employ Egyptian troops alone; and, therefore, you are driven either to the employment of mercenaries—I am sorry to apply that term to soldiers of any nation, even Egyptian under English officers—or you must use that more scarce commodity, the British Forces. Well, then, unless we have some explanation, it appears to me that grave danger is involved in that course. There is no less danger involved than the duality of the Army. This is not a time when you can stand up and say that an Egyptian Army exists independently and separately of the forces under British control. Why, see what happened not many days ago. There is a telegram of the Adjutant General with instructions that the Royal Artillery were to take over guns and equipment—from an English Battery? No—from a Camel Battery which had started from Cairo, and which was to be brought back at once. The Adjutant General may, in this case, be excused on the ground of emergency; but how is this duality going to work? The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War was asked a Question on the 3rd of March concerning the troops in Egypt, and he replied—

> "We have received information that a Brigade—at any rate a body—of the Egyptian Army has been sent to Assouan. General Stephenson has received instructions, if Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Government should think it necessary, to send a British force to some point up the Nile in support of that force. We have also telegraphed a request that in the event of their having been sent, the fullest information should be transmitted as to the destination and composition of the force; but I have not heard that any orders on the subject has yet been issued."

I want the Committee to consider the grave question which is here involved. It may be a disgrace to be beaten; it is no disgrace for the best troops in the world to be overpowered; but supposing the troops are sent to the frontier—I care not whether they are Egyptian or British—you must bear in mind if you support them by British troops that those who attack them attack an integral part of the British Army, and the troops by which you support them must come from your own forces. One word, partly in connection with what has passed to-day, and partly in connection with a statement made by the noble Marquess two days ago. It seems to me, whether it be General Stephenson, General Baker, General Graham, or any other officer in command, you have no right to throw upon Commanders—I care not whether Naval or Military—responsibility for the principle by which they are guided in their movements. The policy must be the policy of the Government, although the details may be, and rightly are, left with those who have the Executive responsibility in carrying them out. But when we hear of communications between an Admiral and a General which open up an entirely new campaign, and when we hear that these have been approved by Her Majesty's Government, it seems to me that a greater responsibility is being thrown upon Commanders than you have any right to ask them to undertake. We have a right, therefore, to take the earliest opportunity of asking Her Majesty's Government to inform us, not in detail as to what troops are to be moved hither and thither, nor what garrisons are to be defended, but as to the broad outlines of their policy. We desire to know, then, of what policy they have signified their approval, to what policy they intend to adhere, and whether if, upon the lines of that policy, their subordinates act in a loyal and temperate spirit, Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to the utmost extent to assume responsibility for their acts? Now, Her Majesty's Government want to put down anarchy and to restore order in Egypt—with what success the past 20 months have shown. The Prime Minister, the other day, expressed his indifference to comments which might appear in the Foreign Press. Now, although I touch that point with great reserve, I submit that there may come a time when the Foreign Press may represent, not only its own, but foreign opinion, and that if disorder gains head you cannot escape criticism, perhaps, too, at a time when you will not be able to escape interference. The Prime Minister himself, in moving the Vote of Credit, stated that we were in no sense mandatories—that other Powers only acquiesced in our action. I have no doubt that, so long as their material interests are not affected thereby, they will confine themselves to representations alone. And what is now your position? You have shattered the Army of Egypt; you have altered, and are altering, its Government; and to say the least of it, you have complicated its finances. The Government must know that they are standing, so to speak, upon a quicksand, which, although not yet covered by the tide, trembles beneath their feet. Already in the bazaars and in Cario—as the saying is, from Pasha to donkey-boy—there is the impression that the Government have not checked these disorders, and that these disorders are not checked, with a view of bringing about a state of things which must necessitate the permanent occupation of the country. There is no confidence and no stability. I am not going to use expressions about blood-guiltiness—if bloodshed is to be necessary it is only that you may use the means of war to the ends of peace. But I say that the Government must brush away these cobwebs which obscure their view; they must put aside this pretence, if I may so call it, which deceives no one—neither the Khedive, nor the Prime Minister, nor any man in England. They must put aside this duality of government. You may respect the power and the position of the Khedive; but let it be known that it is England's arm that puts down tyranny, and keeps it down; that it is England's force which protects Egypt alike from internal anarchy and external menace; and that it is her well-known justice which give impartiality to Egyptian tribunals. I remember hearing the Prime Minister, in a former debate in this House, speak with an eloquence which, if I may venture to say so, was never surpassed, even by himself, upon a great work in which the Government of which he was the acknowledged Leader was engaged, and he made use of a famous metaphor which I presume to quote from memory only, because his cadences must live in the mind of everyone who was present —the right hon. Gentleman spoke of "those who, like Phaeton, with unequal hands attempt to guide the chariot of the sun." It is with a firm hand, and with undeviating course alone, that the Government can conduct the Business of the State. Difficulties there have been, and will be; but those difficulties can only be surmounted by your approaching them in a brave and candid spirit. We know that the task which Her Majesty's Government have undertaken is not the work of a day. There is nothing inconsistent with their utterances in the face of day to say—"We will remain in Egypt until our work is done." What we ask on both sides of the House, and what the country has a right to ask, is that the Government should say what they mean; and, having done that, should do what they say. I fear that the Leaders of the Liberal Party move along too much, as the Spanish proverb says, "with the beard on the shoulder;" they are continually looking behind; they are anxiously watching for that Nemesis of Liberal Governments — hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Impulsive and timorous by turns, no Government can hope to succeed in such work as they have undertaken. Though they may have adopted the motto of "rescue and retire," their action has been for the most part "rescue" too late and "retire" too soon. I hope the Committee will pardon me for having detained them so long; but I have felt it my duty to make these observations. The issue is too great, the questions before us are too vital, for those who speak with responsibility in this House always to mince words, however carefully they may weigh them. I have endeavoured, to the best of my limited power, to point out to the Government some of the difficulties in which their policy has involved them. I earnestly entreat them—and I am sure the Committee will join in that entreaty—to look those difficulties in the face, to approach them candidly, and, above all, as far as they may, to take the House and the country into their confidence. That confidence will not be, I feel sure, abused. Your position abroad will not be misunderstood; and even the restrictions which, for the time, it may be necessary to impose upon the otherwise independent action of that Khedival Government which you wish to restore, will be amply condoned in the recollection of those under our rule in Egypt, who, though aliens in race, will be knit to us by a reign of prosperity and peace.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Does the right hon. and gallant Gentleman move any Amendment?

Colonel STANLEY: I am in the hands of the Committee.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Very well, then, Sir, I will take it that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman does not move any Amendment. I rise to make a short statement to the Committee. It sometimes happens — indeed, I have often noticed—that a debate in Committee has been conducted with the same formality as a debate in the House, and has been as protracted as a debate in the House. I hardly know that this discussion has assumed that character; if it should assume that character I may feel myself justified in rising again to address the Committee. At present, I rise simply because I have the practical object in view of ascertaining, as far as I can, what is the real object and purpose of the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and likewise of clearing up, but clearing up by bringing together, the repeated declarations which Her Majesty's Government have made on the subject of their policy, which hon. Gentlemen opposite find fault with on all occasions on the most conflicting grounds. They find fault with it as being too pacific and too warlike, and as being too slow and too quick. In fact, it has united in itself every attribute, however conflicting, only with this one condition—that all the Government do is mischievous. I will endeavour to clear this perplexed and confused issue so far as I am able. In one respect I am disposed to pay a compliment to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, not only for the tone and moderation in which he always is able to couch his arguments and remarks, but likewise for the additional light which he has cast, I will not say upon the policy—that, probably, he would disclaim—but upon the views and intentions of the Opposition. The ideas of which we have had a glimpse in particular speeches from one Member of the Opposition and another, have been combined by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and put together and have come out with something of the character of a complete and comprehensive plan aimed at by the speeches of the Opposition on this question. So far I think that I have this advantage—that when I touch that portion of his speech I shall show that we do desire to be most distinctly at issue upon the policy which we propose, and have always proposed, to pursue, and the policy which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman recommends, so far as we can discern it. Now, Sir, the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, I think, naturally divides itself into three parts—one of them is a part purely retrospective, and is simply a revival of the debate which, after five nights, we terminated about a fortnight ago. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman, at great length, went over the communications with General Hicks, and of the responsibility, or non-responsibility, of Her Majesty's Government for his movement or for his fate. Well, Sir, if ever there was a *res judicate* in Parliament, that is a *res judicate.* That formed the staple of the speech with which the Vote of Censure was submitted to the House, and I will not go farther into that part of the question—for I should be unjustifiably wasting the time of the Committee if I were to go any farther into that part of the question—than to say that there is not the smallest shred of evidence that General Hicks at any time supposed that he had, or was to have, either the material or moral support of the British Government. There is not the smallest shred of evidence in the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, or in any other speech—plenty of argument—made by right hon. Gentlemen opposite that General Hicks must have thought it; and no argument or evidence whatever to show that General Hicks did think he had that material or moral support. There is no evidence to show that he was not perfectly aware that, in any communication he may have had with Lord Dufferin, he was receiving more than the personal opinion of Lord Dufferin — not the slightest evidence. The only piece of evidence worth having which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman adduced was the telegram addressed to General Hicks by the Khedive; because that telegram distinctly went to show that the expedition to Kordofan arose directly from the orders of the Khedive conveyed to General Hicks, and that the British Government in no way intervened, and were in no way responsible. [Colonel STANLEY: It was in English cypher.] In English cypher. The English are responsible because a telegram is conveyed in English cypher! If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman thinks that an argument worth laying before the House, and founding upon it what was to be a Vote of Censure upon Her Majesty's Government, I may say that with that argument I am not prepared to cope. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman goes back to the condition of Egypt generally. He has described our difficulties—difficulties which came to us with the inheritance of the previous Government. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; it is well to meet with inarticulate cries what cannot be met in any other way. Show me—assert, if you venture to assert—and I know there will be no Gentleman belonging to the late Cabinet will venture to assert—that we did not find ourselves in Egypt pledged to the earnest support of the Khedive and his Government. That is an engagement under which we have been, to the best of our power—very badly, indeed, according to hon. Gentlemen opposite—that was the engagement—the benevolent but most unwise engagement—which the late Government made, and which has been the basis of the whole of our policy, as it is now the cause of the whole of our embarrassments in Egypt. I go along with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman when he describes the difficulties of the situation. We are as sensible of them as anyone; and I think that he and his Colleagues should have been a little more sensible of them; because I have shown they were distinctly warned of what was to come before they contracted the engagement. But why should the right hon. and gallant Gentleman exaggerate the difficulties? Why should he say that "for 20 months you have been going on in Egypt and nothing has been done?" Is that true? He says we went to restore tranquillity in Egypt. Tranquillity has been restored. ["Oh, oh!"] Go on with your inarticulate modes of expression; they are extremely suitable and very convenient when no others are available. Tranquillity prevails in Egypt, and until the disasters in the Soudan there was no apprehension with regard to its tranquillity. I will not say absolutely that there is no apprehension at this moment; because, undoubtedly, the advance of a portion of Wood's Army to Assouan is a prudential and preventive measure, adopted for fear the sympathetic influence of the disturbance in the Soudan should produce uneasiness, or even disturbance, among the population of Upper Egypt, who are not quite so easily controlled, and not quite so removed from the possibility of excitement, as the population of Lower Egypt. And that, Sir, is the object of the expedition to Assouan. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has treated it as if it were a measure indicating a policy of advance. It is nothing of the kind. We have been in Egypt pledged, while we remain, to maintain the tranquillity of Egypt, and, of course, that tranquillity must be maintained. While we remain under that pledge that tranquillity must be maintained by the use of the force which is available for the purpose, at the point where it appears to be wanted. It is simply the execution of a portion of the original engagement, for which a part of Wood's Army has gone to Assouan, and for which it is possible that a portion of the British troops may be advanced, either to or towards Assouan, in order to give them support. It has nothing whatever to do with the slightest variation of policy. The right hon, and gallant Gentleman made an appeal to us in the peroration of his speech in entreating us to remain in Egypt until our work was done. If there is one declaration more than another that we have reiterated until the House must be sick of hearing it, it is that very declaration; and it now comes out as the climax of a great Opposition speech, addressed to us in total forgetfulness of the language which we have used, so often and so freely, that really it requires a special petition for the indulgence of the House if one were to attempt to use it again. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman is rather displeased with me for having said I do not look to the guidance of the Foreign Press upon this occasion with very great confidence, and that I was not very disposed to follow it. He says that the Foreign Press may, at certain times, embody foreign opinion. I am one of those who think that in certain cases foreign opinion is a most important element in the materials of consideration for the Government. I think, for example, that if we had difficulties in some quarter of the world, where the countries of Europe had no special interests of their own—in that case their opinions upon our conduct in those difficulties would be of the greatest importance. But at present our position in Egypt is this—we are not doing our own work, nor seeking our own ends; we are doing the work of Europe, and of civilization in general. I must own that I think it would be a very unsafe course indeed for us to say the Foreign Press is to guide us, and to indicate to us the extent to which we are to go—we paying the cost, we shedding the blood as well as finding the treasure. It would be all very well for them to look on and to say—"Oh, my fine fellows, you must not be satisfied here, but you must go a great deal further." These are the circumstances under which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman asks us to have great regard for the opinion of the Foreign Press. Well, I think that it is not a very safe course that he advises, and I entirely decline to follow him in these particulars, although, where an impartial opinion can fairly be expected from the Foreign Press, I am as ready to admit its importance as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, perhaps more so. I have spoken thus far retrospectively of the condition of Egypt. When the right hon. and gallant Gentleman says nothing has been done, I will not go over all the particulars, but I say a good deal has been done. Order has been established; industry is proceeding upon its regular footing; the greatest and most baneful anomalies which existed in Egypt, and which it was most difficult to remove—especially that gross and cruel anomaly of the exemption of foreigners from taxation—have been removed. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman says that is nothing. Why, what was the main cause—the main pretext and the main handle—that was given to discontent—aye, and to just discontent—in Egypt? I believe that very considerable reforms have been effected, and very considerable reductions made, in that other and twin grievance of the Egyptian people—namely, the exorbitant and unnecessary number of foreigners who were employed in the adminstration of Egypt. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has gone into these exaggerations; but the Committee, I am quite sure, will bear in mind that although the work has been rudely checked and arrested—and it is difficult to speak confidently of its ultimate issue—yet great progress has been made; and even at the present moment much has been done, and much that is of the greatest importance, towards the establishment of a better and more stable state of things in Egypt. Now, I want to draw the distinction rather more strongly than it was drawn by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman mingled in his speech two questions, which for us at the moment are very distinct. I mean the question of policy and proceedings in the Soudan, and the question of the policy and proceedings in regard to Egypt Proper. It is impossible for us, in my mind, to form any new conclusion, or modify any old conclusion, with regard to Egypt Proper, until we have been enabled to arrive at some settlement of the formidable question still open in the Soudan. I do not think that that is altogether an immoderate assertion to make. At any rate, it is our belief, with military questions as yet not brought absolutely to a conclusion—though I trust they are very close to it—yet with our soldiers in the Soudan, and until we are able to say that we have closed that chapter, it is idle for us to endeavour to say, or consider, what our exact position in Egypt may be. We cannot, until these operations are concluded, measure exactly the effects of the disaster in the Soudan upon Egypt; and that we should be able to measure that exactly is absolutely necessary in forming a just view of the steps we may have to take in Egypt. But, Sir, it is here that I have to notice the remarkable development of ideas in the speech of the right hon. and gallant

Gentleman, though I see, or think I see, that we cannot enter with advantage on the consideration of a policy for Egypt Proper until we are enabled, in some degree, to close this chapter in the Soudan, and especially the military chapter. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman is under no such difficulty. He has got his plan cut and dry, and he has told us what it is. It is that the Egyptian Government should be swept clean away; it is that the Khedive may be maintained, or shall be maintained, as a puppet in the hands of the British authorities—[Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: He is that now.]—and that the political, the military, the administrative, the judicial, and the financial government of Egypt shall all be done, both in fact and in word, as a British operation. That is to say, we are to assume the government of Egypt. Now, Sir, that is what we shall not do. And one objection which I think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has overlooked is this—it would be a gross breach of the public law of Europe. Even if there were no breach of the public law, I hope that this country will well consider its course—will consider the future that will lie before it—before it undertakes the government in Egypt of a Mahommedan people. I hope the country will take note of the declarations of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; and I undoubtedly say that he may well find fault with our policy if he measures it with his own, for, no doubt, he thinks his own to be wise and just. In our view it is neither the one nor the other. So much with regard to Egypt. But I come now to the Soudan; and though I do not think that this Vote affords a very appropriate opportunity for dealing with the affairs of Egypt, or the policy in Egypt Proper, yet I quite admit it does afford fair opportunity for comment and criticism with regard to the Soudan, subject, of course, to the general rules of prudence. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman commenced his speech by saying that if he had had doubts as to the necessity of raising a discussion at the present time those doubts would have been removed by the remarks of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington); and he treated the remarks of my noble Friend as involving a great change with respect to the views and intentions of the Government as to the Soudan. Sir, there is no change whatever in those views and intentions, and there was no change whatever, expressed or implied, in any of the words of my noble Friend. The questions of policy with regard to the Soudan are these—they refer partly to the beleaguered garrisons of Tokar and Sinkat; partly to Suakin and the coast of the Red Sea; partly and mainly to the interior of the Soudan; to the mission of General Gordon, and the plans which General Gordon may adopt or recommend. It is needless to dwell upon the questions of the two garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar; that question has been entirely disposed of by the one unfortunately having been destroyed, and by the other having been partly rescued and having partly gone over to the other side. With regard to Suakin, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman appeared to think that the plans of the Government had undergone a change, and that such change had been in some way announced in the speech of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington). There was nothing of the kind. My noble Friend said nothing to modify the declarations we have uniformly made, to this effect—that after the affairs relating to the two garrisons were disposed of, the object of the forces would be a defensive object, and would have reference mainly to Suakin. I have said that, because, although I admit there are other points on the coast of the Red Sea which may become the objects of interest, there is no other point at which there appears as yet to be any likelihood of difficulty or danger. The security of Suakin has always been professed as an object of policy by Her Majesty's Government under the existing circumstances; and we have stated, in the strongest manner, that any operation undertaken outside of Suakin, whatever its form or character might be, would be, in its aim and in its substance, strictly a defensive measure to prevent the placing of that port in a position of danger—not merely of danger while we had a large British force on the coast, but of danger when we had reached a point which we seek to reach with all the expedition we can —namely, the point of withdrawing the military force which is now in Egypt. Therefore, let it be understood that we stand exactly where we did in relation to the defence of Suakin and with regard to military measures. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman, in this part of his speech, commented on the duty we owe to those who are acting for us in naval or military matters, or in civil matters, not to throw upon them the responsibility of any principles which are applied to the conduct of the war. Certainly, Sir, I should almost have thought that such an appeal was unnecessary; because it refers to a principle so elementary that even the most incapable Government must be supposed to be perfectly cognizant of it, and the House of Commons would never tolerate for one moment the slightest departure from it. I do not understand in the least degree how it was that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman applied that principle to the circumstances before us, because in the circumstances before us what he had to say was that a certain Proclamation had been issued. Certainly it had. What were the object and the principle of that Proclamation? What I understand the object of that Proclamation to be, though it is impossible to speak positively without having it under my eye, is to assure and give notice to the people, in the first place—and especially to the soldiers, rather than, perhaps, to the Chiefs—with whom we were in action last week that if they will disperse, and cease to threaten Suakin, they are perfectly safe; and, in the second place, that the purpose for which a British Army is there, and for which British influence and responsibility are undoubtedly at this moment engaged in the Soudan, is to relieve the people from the grievances from which they have been suffering; and what is that but another mode of expressing, in perfectly intelligible language, the relief of the people from the Egyptian supremacy, which has been carried on under Governors who have not studied, and could not be expected to study, the habits of the people? That, I understand, is the object of the Proclamation. It is sought to throw the responsibility on Admiral Hewett and General Graham; but we adopt the Proclamation; we are responsible for it; and if there is a question upon it, let the Government be challenged here. I have, I hope, stated explicitly what is our position with regard to Suakin. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman, I think, has asked a great deal more—though that is, perhaps, a matter of detail—than he himself could possibly at this moment expect us to explain. He wants to know precisely what are the ultimate arrangements for the security of Suakin, and other ports on the Red Sea. Now, I think that is asking what he can hardly expect us to answer. There are rights at Suakin other than our rights. There are the rights of Egypt, which are not yet abandoned; there are the rights of the Sultan, which we have never questioned, and which we have every reason to respect; and it is too much that now, within five or six days of a considerable military operation, undertaken for the security of Suakin, with which we are at the moment charged, without our being able yet to say that the force menacing Suakin has finally been dispersed—it is too much to ask what are our final arrangements for the security of Suakin. The principle upon which we go I have explained explicitly. We shall have to consider, subject to the correction of the House of Commons, what will be the best form of providing ultimately for the security of Suakin; but the withdrawal of the British Forces from that region undoubtedly is an object which we admit to be an object of desire and of urgency, and one which we shall endeavour, with all possible speed, to attain. Then the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has entered upon a discussion with regard to General Gordon. As to General Gordon, I have no more to do than to say that we make ourselves responsible for all the measures which he adopts. But the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has also been discussing prospectively the actions of General Gordon, and has been quoting General Gordon's plans, and he has been showing that some portions of these plans will be very difficult to carry into effect. I think that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is rather open to the remark which was made the other day with regard to Suakin by the hon. Member for Newcastle—that you are endeavouring to withdraw from the House of Commons, and by discussions across the Table, the power of deciding these matters. He invites the Government to take the House and the country into their confidence. Yes; but he invites the Government to take the whole world into their confidence. He invites us to take every discontented man in Egypt—every man in arms in the Soudan—into our confidence, although he knows that there are strong prudential reasons which make that extremely difficult. We do not think it well to discuss now the future plans of General Gordon. What I say is this—so long as General Gordon continues to be in the Soudan the agent of the Egyptian Government, with our concurrence and authority, we will make ourselves responsible for his acts. I do not think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman goes the right way to work in describing General Gordon's acts and intentions. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman quoted from an important Paper by General Gordon a passage in which he said—

> "Her Majesty's Government have come to the irrevocable decision not to incur the very onerous duty of securing to the peoples of the Soudan a just future Government. That, as a consequence, Her Majesty's Government have determined to restore to these peoples their independence, and will no longer suffer the Egyptian Government to interfere with their affairs."—[Egypt, No. 7 (1884), p. 2.]

The right hon. and gallant Gentleman might have gone a little further, and said General Gordon entirely concurred in these views, and told the right hon. and gallant Gentleman in this document that he did concur in them, and went there with his whole heart to give effect to them. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman must, I think, have felt that in describing that document he left out what was the most important thing of all. General Gordon said—

> "Although it is out of my province to give any opinion as to the action of Her Majesty's Government in leaving the Soudan, still I must say it would be an iniquity to reconquer these peoples and then hand them back to the Egyptians without guarantees of future good government."—[*Ibid.*]

The right hon. and gallant Gentleman may meet us, and say he does not propose to hand them back to the Egyptians without guarantees for good government. He proposes to take them over himself. That is virtually the upshot of what the right hon. and gallant Gentleman said. What was the meaning of that part of his speech where he described the wide range of country between Assouan and Khartoum? What was the meaning of that, and of the want of government for that country, except that we ought to undertake the government of the country and be responsible for it? [Colonel STANLEY dissented.] The right hon. and gallant Gentleman may shake his head; but it is in vain to shake his head in the teeth of his own words. As I understand him, the military, the financial, and the political administration of Egypt are to be carried on, in substance and in name, by the British Government. What follows? First of all, to provide for the two courses of the Nile, until you come to the country properly called the Soudan; and then, possibly, taking a moderate view of the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, to leave out Kordofan and Darfour; but as to Sennaar, and the Eastern Provinces of the Soudan, it is evident that he contemplates a virtual annexation in the name of Her Majesty's Government. I have endeavoured to make it understood that the Government feel themselves precluded from any profitable discussion of the general policy in Egypt; but as to the Soudan they remain precisely where they were. They are there for certain purposes. They will make provision for these purposes; they will endeavour, as soon as is compatible with these purposes, to withdraw the military forces in that region; and they render themselves fully responsible for all the measures that General Gordon may take. Under these circumstances, I can quite understand the dissatisfaction of hon. Gentlemen opposite with the policy of Her Majesty's Government. But in the course of the 12 nights which we have, wholly or partially, devoted to debates on Egypt out of the 25 Sittings in the present Session, I should have supposed that the affairs of Egypt had occupied nearly as large a share of the time and attention of the British Parliament as is due to them. We do not wish, in any degree, to restrain or check that liberty of criticism which belongs to the rights and duties of Members of Parliament; but we believe that no Government, under any circumstances of equal difficulty, have ever gone further in explaining its views, its intentions, and the principles of its policy, than we have done with regard to the affairs of Egypt.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL rose to move an Amendment which he had placed upon the Paper.

MR. LABOUCHERE rose to Order, and said he had an Amendment on the

Paper; but if the hon. Member's Amendment was taken first he was afraid he would be cut out.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Northampton did not rise when the Question was put, and I called upon the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy; but as the hon. Member for Northampton has an Amendment to reduce the Vote by the larger amount, it is more in Order that he should be heard first.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was very glad to have heard the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, because it had given, at least, a vague notion of the policy of the Opposition; but that policy, or the indication of a policy, was too vague to induce hon. Members on this side of the House to place Egyptian matters in the hands of hon. Gentlemen opposite instead of in the hands of Her Majesty's Ministers. They had proposed no Amendment, and he did not know whether they intended to oppose the Vote or not. They had made a broad railing complaint against what the Government had done; but they had not said whether this money ought to be paid by this country or not. The Prime Minister had complained more than once that there was a tendency on the part of hon. Members to talk a good deal about Egypt. Well, he considered that he had two mandates to talk upon Egyptian matters—one from his constituents, the other from the Prime Minister. His constituents had recently passed a resolution thanking him for having, in every way he possibly could, opposed any further money being spent upon Egypt; while the Prime Minister had himself more than once pointed out that one of the great evils of these expeditions was that they must necessarily interfere with business, both at home and abroad. The Prime Minister had, in his opinion, truly stated what ought to be the view of the House when he said they ought to consider well whether they would increase the responsibility of this country by taking under the sway of England—for that was what hon. Gentlemen opposite wished—a large Mahommedan population. They might think what they would; but, unquestionably, the vast mass of the people of Egypt strongly objected to our interfering in any sort of way in the government of their country, with our ideas of civilization, connected with different religions. Anyone, he thought, must admit that when we talked about civilizing the Egyptians we were talking of civilizing them against their own wish. Hon. Gentlemen opposite asked the Government to do so; but the Prime Minister had stated that we had an engagement with Europe, and our engagement with Europe was to put up some sort of Government in Egypt, and remain there until something like law and order had been restored in that country. But the Prime Minister had said that tranquillity and order did now exist in Egypt, and that some sort of institutions of a liberal nature were gradually growing up there. Therefore, we had fulfilled our engagement to Europe by what had been already done. It could not be said that we were there for any gain to ourselves; and, indeed, if we were offered Egypt as a gift we should make a great mistake if we accepted it. In that case we should have to maintain, at least, some sort of an army there; but what he objected to particularly in this Vote was that Parliament was asked to vote this sum of money not only for Egypt Proper, but on account of the military operations in the Soudan. As the Prime Minister had said, the question of Colonel Hicks was a question *in res judicata;* that was perfectly true. Colonel Hicks went there by his own free will, or, rather, by the will of the Egyptian Government, without any responsibility on our part, and he was defeated; and, his army having been defeated, the House had a perfect right to protest against any other expedition being sent there, because the only ground on which an expedition could be sent there was the restoration of order in Lower Egypt. Therefore, the House had a right to say that advantage should not be taken of that in order to send a second expedition to the Soudan. He admitted that the Government had been in great difficulties owing to the action of their Predecessors; but why had they pledged themselves not only to defend Egypt Proper, but also the ports on the Red Sea? That he had never been able to quite understand. These ports were many hundreds of miles away from Egypt, and we had determined to advise Egypt to give up the Soudan. Why, then, should the Government have said they would defend these ports, they being really ports of the Soudan? The Prime Minister had told the House that the recent operations were of an essentially defensive character, and that the battle—or he would almost say the slaughter—at El Teb, was for the defence of Suakin. He would accept the right hon. Gentleman's view; but he must then point out, as a necessary consequence, that we were there in the interests of Egypt, and for Egypt. The Prime Minister had stated that he was not prepared to say what would happen when we withdrew from Suakin; but it might be taken as an assumption, until something else was said to the contrary, that Suakin, being an Egyptian port, would revert to Egypt. We had, therefore, gone to defend an Egyptian port. We had defended it by the slaughter of these people; but, still, this was the sole excuse to justify us in going there and slaying these Arabs. There were two theories put forward with regard to Suakin; and he must observe, with all respect for the Prime Minister, that they had been put forward since it was determined to charge the British nation with the costs of the expedition. One theory was with regard to the Slave Trade. It had been stated several times by Gentlemen on the Front Bench that in order to put down the Slave Trade in the Soudan it was necessary to defend Suakin. As a matter of fact, the coast of the Soudan was not very far from Arabia. The Red Sea might be considered a species of lake; but the ports on the Red Sea were not essential to the taking of slaves over from the Soudan to Arabia. They were taken down to the coast, put in dhows, and ferried over to Arabia. Consul Moncrieff, in a Report last year, had mentioned the different ports on the coast to which the slaves were ferried, and he specially excepted Suakin. He believed that no slaves had ever been sent there; but if the Egyptian sway was re-established, could it be supposed that that would put an end to slavery? These Egyptians were the people who had been at the bottom of the Slave Trade. They were the people who had always encouraged the trade; and he believed that if the Egyptian flag again floated over Suakin it would become a great *entrepôt*, and there would be a great increase in the Slave Trade. The ground upon which the Committee was asked to vote this money was that it was possible the insurrection or movement of the Mahdi might extend to Arabia. He had been surprised to hear the Prime Minister use that argument, because he had understood that the right hon. Gentleman's "bag and baggage" policy applied to the whole of the Turkish Empire. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] He was sorry to see that the right hon. Gentleman dissented from this, for he thought the less there was of Turkish rule the better it would be for the whole world. He should, in fact, be glad to see the "bag and baggage" policy which the Prime Minister had suggested with regard to Roumelia adopted in Arabia; but, anyhow, he could not see why they should spend all this money in order to prevent the movement of the Mahdi extending to Arabia. In Arabia there were Turkish Governors who oppressed the people; and it would be advantageous to Arabia if there were some national movement in that country. He thought he had shown that we had no reason, either in regard to the Slave Trade or to the Turkish Empire, to defend Suakin; that we went there, and our only ground for going there was for the benefit of the Egyptian people. The Egyptian Army having been vanquished, we then sent our men there and spent our money. It followed, therefore, that Egypt, and not England, if anybody, ought to pay the cost. It might be said that Egypt could not pay; that the fellaheen were already over-taxed. He quite admitted that; but he held that there were two sources from which the money might be taken. The first source was the bondholders; but if that was objected to, then there was the Egyptian Tribute. He considered that the bondholders were at the bottom of the whole of the mischief in Egypt; and he further considered that the Egyptian Debt was one of the greatest swindles that could be conceived. We had established a Control there which had gradually acquired power; but there was, as far as he could see, but one point underlying the whole of our interference, and that was that the bondholders should receive their money. Lord Salisbury wrote despatches insisting that the coupons should be paid; our agents wrote back that that could not be done without cruelty and oppression; but, still, Lord Salisbury insisted that the coupons should be paid, and that culminated in an outbreak. We had crushed Arabi, bombarded and destroyed Alexandria, and destroyed the Egyptian Army at Tel-el-Kebir; and what was all that for? He could not see any other reason than the benefit of the bondholders. It was frequently stated that we were under some species of international obligation to see that the bondholders received their interest; but what was this international obligation? At one time, before the Law of Liquidation took place, there were certain International Tribunals; and any subject of any European State who did not receive his due interest could sue in these International Tribunals. But Egypt was bankrupt, and could not pay; and therefore it was proposed—he thought England put herself at the head of the movement—that there should be some sort of composition agreed to; that all the 14 Powers should say—"If you will pay our subjects so much, we will engage that none of our subjects shall sue for any excess in the International Tribunals." That was the basis of the Law of Liquidation; but Lord Salisbury had said—and this was a most important factor in the matter—the costs of the Administration were to come first, and the bondholders afterwards. At the present moment Egypt owed £5,000,000 or £6,000,000, which she would have to borrow; and, consequently, we should have to go to the Great Powers, and either suggest that the Sinking Fund should be arrested for a time, or that the interest on the Debt should be lowered. In any case, we should have to get the interest on this £5,000,000 or £6,000,000, not from the fellaheen, because they could not pay any more, but from the bondholders. The question was, whether the British artizan was to be taxed for a matter which in no way concerned him, in order that the Egyptian Shylock might have his pound of flesh? We must put aside entirely the idea that the fellaheen were to be unceasingly taxed, because they could pay no more; and the question was, whether the bondholders should pay, or whether the artizans of this country should be taxed, This was essentially an Egyptian matter; and when Her Majesty's Government went there to defend Suakin for the Egyptians, that involved the necessity of their accepting the view that the Egyptians themselves ought to pay. He held that the bondholders ought to pay; but if hon. Gentlemen objected to that, then there was the Egyptian Tribute, and they knew what that was. He knew it was said that this Tribute had been the cause of the evil, and that innocent people would suffer in consequence; but surely the mortgagee could not have a better title to the estate than the owner. The Turks were very astute, and they had mortgaged the other day the Tribute of Eastern Roumelia. He hoped the bondholders would insist upon getting it. If gentlemen would buy bonds which represented an unjust Tribute they must take the consequences, and if they lost their money they had only themselves to blame. He had endeavoured to give a practical turn to the debate. He had stated what his object was, and he was now going to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £206,150. He left two items in. The first was a trifle to be included in the Estimates for chaplains. He really thought it would be monstrous to insist upon a Mahommedan population paying for our chaplains. He had also left in an item for nurses. That also was a work of charity, and he saw no objection to the payment of the amount charged; but he would ask the Committee to refuse to vote the rest of the Estimate—namely, £206,150. He had no doubt that he would receive the usual answer, that the money had already been expended and must be paid; but, in this particular instance, that argument did not quite hold, because, although the money might have been expended, the real question was, who ought to pay it? His contention was that Egypt ought to pay it; and, therefore, in conclusion, he begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £206,150.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £164,750, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was unable to support the Amendment, and he intended to oppose it for this reason. He thought the amount which the Government had assigned for the purpose of this Supplementary Estimate was in itself wholly inadequate for the discharge of the responsibility they had incurred. Therefore, as he thought that a larger amount was required than the amount asked for, he certainly could not support the reduction moved by the hon. Member for Northampton. It seemed to him that they had gained one considerable advantage from the discussions which had taken place during the Session. They had, for the first time, obtained from Her Majesty's Government an admission that they had incurred vast responsibility by the duties they had undertaken in connection with Egypt. That admission had been candidly made by Lord Granville, and it had also been quite as strongly made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). If he (Mr. Tomlinson) dwelt upon the admission for a moment, it was because, although it had been strongly made by the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman, it would appear, from the arguments of other Members of the Government, that they only appreciated the real extent of their responsibility very imperfectly. Even the President of the Local Government Board, while admitting the immense responsibility which now attached to this country, appeared to him (Mr. Tomlinson) to occupy his mind with the things more immediately in view, and to endeavour to draw away the attention of the House from what was really one of the most serious of their responsibilities. The right hon. Gentleman, on more than one occasion, had spoken of the great responsibility which arose in reference to the defence of the coast of the Red Sea; but he (Mr. Tomlinson) could not help thinking that there was another responsibility which was of overwhelmingly great importance—namely, the defence of that portion of Egypt which lay upon the coast of the Mediterranean. He contended that that was a responsibility which had arisen directly in consequence of the action of the present Government, and it was a responsibility which would still remain, even if we were able to withdraw our troops from Egypt. If we could not be said to have incurred it to the full extent after the bombardment of Alexandria, certainly we did so after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir; but he thought that the responsibility for the defence of the Mediterranean portion of the Egyptian coast distinctly arose out of the circumstance of the bombardment of Alexandria, one result of which was to destroy the existing defences of that city. From time immemorial Alexandria had been a fortified city, and its position was such as to demand that it should be fortified. It was the key of the Nile, and the Nile might be said to be Egypt itself. But either during that bombardment, or shortly subsequent to that event, the British entirely destroyed the defences of Alexandria. They not only destroyed those portions of the military stores which might be said to be comparatively worthless, but they destroyed all the modern effective artillery. There were within the city a large number, although he did not know exactly how many, of Armstrong guns. No doubt they were used with some effect against the British Fleet; but after the bombardment those guns were entirely destroyed. He did not know whether the extent to which the destruction of guns was carried out had ever been fully stated in any Paper laid before Parliament; but he had seen an extract from a Paper published in Egypt which gave a statement showing the extent to which the destruction was carried. The document in question was an extract from a despatch which gave an account of the dismissal of Arabi, and then went on to say—

> "After 10 hours' bombardment our fortifications were annihilated; 400 cannons were destroyed, and the greater part of our artillerymen were killed and disabled."

He believed there was a mistake in the statement in reference to the destruction of these 400 guns. It did not take place during the bombardment, but was deliberately carried out by the orders of the British Commander after the bombardment was over. He had it upon good authority—the authority of an experienced military man, who was out there a short time afterwards—that the destruction of these guns afforded a remarkable instance of the progress made by modern science. All that was done was to apply a small quantity of gun cotton to a particular part of each gun, and it was at once rendered quite useless. His own opinion was that such an act of simple and deliberate Vandalism ought to have been prevented.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that the hon. Gentleman is going a little further than he is justified in going by the Vote now before the Committee. I do not think the question of the bombardment of Alexandria is involved in the Vote.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he was prepared to submit at once to the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman; but he had been anxious to explain why it was that he opposed the Motion made by the hon. Member for Northampton for the reduction of the Vote. The point he wished to put to the Committee was that, so far from the present Vote being adequate to enable the Government to carry out the responsibility they had incurred in Egypt, it was a great deal too small; and it was only by leaving out of consideration the responsibility for the defence of the Mediterranean coast that it could be considered sufficient. But as the right hon. Gentleman had ruled that he could not go more fully into that question he would pass it by. But, whether in reference to the coast of the Mediterranean or the coast of the Red Sea, it appeared to him that our responsibility for everything that had happened had been distinctly brought about by our own action. Whatever power had been left in the hands of the Egyptian authorities and the Egyptian Government, it was perfectly clear from Lord Dufferin's despatches that the policy of the Government was entirely dictated by Lord Dufferin himself. He could read extracts from Lord Dufferin's despatches to show that the purposes for which our Army was sent there were entirely limited to the internal defence of Egypt; an external defence of that country being entirely outside their operations. In 1883, in laying down the conditions on which he estimated that 6,000 men would be sufficient, Lord Dufferin said that, even on the assumption that Egypt could be secured by diplomatic means from being involved in disturbances in the Provinces, a considerable force would still be required. Therefore, everything outside the internal defence of Egypt Proper, which included, in the first instance, the defence of the Northern boundaries, and also the defence of the Soudan, had been deliberately left out of account, in order that the Government might not be brought face to face with the real financial problem of Egypt. What he contended was, that if there were difficulties which required the employment of a force to control the proceedings of other Powers outside Egypt Proper, the obligation to find that force fell upon the British Government. Consequently, such an Amendment as that which had been proposed by the hon. Member for Northampton was one which they could not, in honour or self-respect as a nation having the slightest regard to right and justice, accept at all. The hon. Member for Northampton had, first of all, suggested that the expense of these operations might be thrown upon Egypt, leaving a chance of recovering it by some arrangement with the bondholders. Now, he (Mr. Tomlinson) thought their experience in regard to the six months' loan raised at the rate of 6 per cent for the purpose of carrying on the administration of Egypt showed pretty clearly that the influences which were exercised in connection with the rights and privileges of the bondholders would prevent any part of the money coming from such a source as that. In regard to the Egyptian Tribute, the Government had asserted over and over again—and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had that night reiterated the assertion—that they had no intention, in anything they were doing in Egypt, to interfere with the rights and privileges of the Sultan. Then, with that limitation, how it could be supposed that any part of the Turkish Tribute could be applied to the payment of the expense of the war at Suakin was to him perfectly unintelligible. He did not think many Members would be found who were prepared to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton. He (Mr. Tomlinson) had hoped that he might have been able to go a little more fully into these matters, and especially into the important question how far the duty had devolved on this country of providing for the defence of Alexandria. That was an important point, and one which had not been entered into before. At the present moment the defence of Alexandria was practically left to our Mediterranean Fleet; and, as far as he knew, no Estimate had been taken for the cost of strengthening the defences. It had, however, been ruled by the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair that he could not discuss that question at length; and he would, therefore, only say that he intended strongly to oppose the Amendment which the hon. Member for Northampton had moved.

MR. RYLANDS remarked that the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) seemed to have arrived at the conclusion that hon. Members on that side of the House would not be disposed to vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton. The hon. Member for Preston seemed to entertain the idea that, on the whole, the sum asked for by Her Majesty's Government was insufficient; and it seemed to be of very little consequence to the hon. Member whether the taxpayers of this country should have their burdens increased or not. Now, whatever might be the view of hon. Gentlemen inside that House, he (Mr. Rylands) ventured to say that out-of-doors there was a strong feeling against these recurring charges being laid on the National Exchequer. There was a very strong impression that it was a gross injustice that the industry of the country should be seriously burdened in order to confer advantages upon a people who ought, if such expenditure was necessary, to take steps for bearing the burden themselves. Personally, he was somewhat unfortunately placed in this discussion, because he did not entirely concur in the views of some of his hon. Friends near him when they contended that the Government should leave Egypt at once. Now, although we had committed at first what he considered to be a crime, yet he was bound to say that after the bombardment and destruction of Alexandria he thought, when they had shattered the Government of Egypt, they were necessitated, in order to preserve the Egyptian State from absolute anarchy and destruction, to afford an opportunity, by the development of the administration of Egypt, for the good government of that country. Therefore, when his hon. Friend seemed to argue that they ought at once to leave Egypt to take care of itself, and to take no further interest in that country, he was not at all able to join with him. On the contrary, although, as he said, he believed that the Government had committed an act which, in the very strongest terms, he had denounced as a crime, yet he had always considered that, having so shattered the Government of Egypt, and having destroyed the only National movement on which there seemed to be any possibility of developing that country, if they left Egypt now, and left the Egyptians to "stew in their own juice," they would commit a blunder, which was, perhaps, worse than a crime. Therefore he had never joined with his hon. Friends in thinking that they ought now to withdraw from the country. On the contrary, it had always appeared to him to be the most statesmanlike course that the Government should accept their responsibility fully and without disguise. The mischief had been done, and the Government, by pretending that they had no responsibility, were trying to establish the fiction of an Egyptian Power which did not actually exist. Originally the Government did too little. They ought to have stopped the expedition of Hicks Pasha, and thus have prevented the catastrophe which had taken place. Now, however, they were doing too much. Having done too little for some time, they were now doing too much. In regard to the policy of the Government in the Soudan—as far as it was a policy—of withdrawing from the Soudan and giving up to the Soudanese the management of their own affairs, he entirely approved of that policy; but he thought they ought to let that policy be well known in the East of the Soudan, in the way in which General Gordon had made it known in the West. What had been the consequence of thus making it known? General Gordon had obtained a very large amount of sympathy from the Mahdi's followers, and the various tribes in the neighbourhood of Khartoum. He had told the Soudanese that in rebelling against the intolerable tyranny of their Egyptian Rulers they were patriots, and not rebels. Her Majesty's Government were constantly calling them rebels. They were not rebels; but they were actuated by a patriotic desire to throw off the Egyptian yoke; and if we had taken as much pains before the battle of El Teb to let the Natives understand the policy we intended to carry out, and had made them realize, as General Gordon had made them realize in every part of the Soudan, that we had come to free them from an intolerable yoke, and that we were not going to treat them as rebels, we might have prevented all the late bloodshed which we now so much deplored. A policy of conciliation might have failed; he could not say that influences might not have been brought to bear which would have prevented such a policy from being successful; but he saw nothing in their acts to induce him to believe that if anything like the same effort had been made in regard to Osman Digna as was made in another part of the Soudan by the Proclamation of General Gordon, we might not have prevented a collision by convincing the Soudanese what our objects were, and that it was a British Force which had appeared in the field, and not an Egyptian Force. He was afraid that the same efforts now would not be attended by the same success; and although we had issued a Proclamation, with a view of obtaining the dispersal of Osman Digna's forces, he was afraid that unless Her Majesty's Government were extremely careful they would be led on. It might possibly happen that having fought one battle and destroyed 3,000 of these wretched men, in order, he supposed, to re-establish the prestige of the defenders of Egyptian rule, the danger might arise that when we undertook the defence of the littoral of the Red Sea we might be drawn from Suakin in order to disperse the rebels, as we still chose to call them, who had congregated a few miles distant, and were threatening our communications. The Prime Minister said that the instruction given to General Graham was that he should not go to any considerable distance. What did a considerable distance mean? It must not be forgotten that something more had been said. They were told that friendly tribes would do certain things in opening up the route to Berber. He contended that that was a very dangerous step, and we might be dragged by these friendly tribes into further complications; and he was afraid that it would end in the old story of the British Government finding itself placed in a position which would involve either loss of life or property. The honour of the country might be endangered, and they might find it necessary to defend these friendly tribes. He did not think, therefore, that this Vote of Credit was the last Supplementary Estimate they were likely to have. They had been trying, in times past, to check the Expenditure of the country; but he ventured to tell the Committee that unless they did something to put a stop to the kind of policy which was being pursued now, there would be very little hope of making any serious impression upon the Expenditure of the country. His strong desire was to see, as quickly as possible, the policy of the Government carried out; of absolutely withdrawing from the Soudan, and leaving the Soudan under a Government of its own Chiefs; washing our hands, in point of fact, of all the complications which might arise from our having even partial possession of this enormous tract of country. He should also be very glad to see the Government, as quickly as possible, establishing and developing the administrative autonomy of Egypt; but, at the same time, while he was quite of opinion that the British Government should not withdraw from Egypt until that object had been accomplished, he thought the way to secure its accomplishment was not by continually telling everybody that they were going to withdraw at the earliest possible opportunity. As far as his judgment went, it seemed to him that their withdrawal from Egypt was so remote that, as far as possible, they ought to let it be understood that while they were doing all in their power to create a sound administration, and to bring a new administration into activity, their work would not be fully accomplished until there was a sufficient amount of intelligence and patriotism in the Egyptians themselves to justify their being intrusted with the management of their own affairs—it must always be remembered that they were creating the primary elements of authority, and that it was something like putting the Government into tutelage. They had, as it were, to bring Egypt through its childhood, and teach it how to walk in the hope, at no distant day, of witnessing in it the strength and experience of manhood. What he wished to urge upon the Committee was this—that inasmuch as they were doing so much for Egypt, and that all this expense, trouble, and responsibility was thrown upon them in order to secure the interests of the Egyptian people, they had a right in return to expect that the Egyptian Government should pay the costs, and not the people—the hard-working taxpayers—of this country. If he were asked how the Egyptian Government were to raise this additional money, whether they were to impose an additional taxation upon the fellaheen, he should say certainly not. One thing that was most essential for the progress of Egypt was to release the springs of her industry by reducing the taxation imposed upon the fellaheen. No doubt somebody must suffer; and it appeared to him they had a perfect right to take the Revenue of Egypt; to set apart from it the sum necessary for the administration of the Government of the country; and then if, above that, they had any sum available for the payment of its debts, let them pay those debts under certain conditions to the bondholders. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had indicated that Egypt was a bankrupt State. If that were so, this Law of Liquidation was only another mode of expressing the idea of bankruptcy; and this bankrupt State, having other obligations to meet, would be justified in making a composition with its creditors. If Egypt was unable to pay its debts, let the country be passed through a National Bankruptcy Court. Her Majesty's Government should clearly understand that if they were going to raise Egypt, they must take from the shoulders of the people a very considerable financial burden. They had a right to say—"We expect Egypt to pay for its own administration; we expect that this charge now imposed upon us for the protection of Egypt should be repaid by-and-bye. Therefore, we say that Egypt must make another liquidation, and you must assist in passing it through another Bankruptcy Court, which will relieve the people of Egypt, and give to the creditors as much as they can reasonably hope to obtain." He thought they had a right to say that to the Government, and that the Government would be perfectly justified in making such a representation to Egypt. By taking that course Egypt would be greatly benefited, and, at the same time, the British taxpayer would be relieved of the burden which he now had to bear, and which was very unjustly imposed upon him.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he thought that the policy indicated by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in the last speech was the true policy which Her Majesty's Government ought to adopt. The reason why the taxpayer of this country was called upon to contribute to the cost of restoring order in Egypt was because the foreign Debt of Egypt was so large, and the interest so heavy, that a sufficient sum was not left for conducting the Government of Egypt at home. His hon. Friend said Egypt was practically bankrupt, because she was not able to pay the interest upon her foreign Debt, and, at the same time, to conduct her Government at home, and every 1*s.* voted by the House of Commons to make up the deficiency was a contribution from the industry of this country towards the interest to be paid to the bondholders. If Egypt was not able to pay for the defence of the Soudan, and found it necessary to apply to this country for assistance, it amounted to this—that so much was paid by this country to the bondholders. They ought to compel the Egyptians to abandon the Soudan, if they could not afford to keep it. The Provinces there cost more than they were worth; and, in his opinion, Her Majesty's Government were perfectly right in enforcing the evacuation of those Provinces. At the same time, he thought it would have been better for everybody if they had enforced this principle sooner. The evacuation would be in the interests of the Egyptian people themselves, for the purpose of restoring good government in that country, It appeared to him that the Egyptian people should pay the cost of restoring good government, and not the taxpayers of this country. There was only one way in which that could be done; and it was, as the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had said, let Egypt make another Act of Bankruptcy; let Egypt do as Spain had done for so long a period—pay no interest at all to the bondholders until the bondholders were reduced to such an abject condition that they would be obliged to take whatever Egypt chose to offer to them. If the bondholders refused to accept the composition and a reduction of the interest, let them go without it; because the expenses of carrying on the Government of Egypt, coupled with the expense of paying the bondholders, were more than the taxpayers of Egypt could endure; and Her Majesty's Government, who were actually the Rulers of Egypt at the present moment, ought not to enforce this taxation for this double purpose upon the English people. It would be a mere act of humanity to take the course suggested by the hon.

Member for Burnley, because it was impossible to screw any more out of these Egyptian people. So clearly did Her Majesty's Government realize that fact that they were obliged to come to the wealthy taxpayers of this country, in order to defray the burdens which ought to fall upon the Egyptians themselves. They were in Egypt for the genuine purpose of restoring a sound and stable Government in that country; and it stood to common sense that the people of Egypt should pay for it, and not the people of this country. Therefore, the bondholders should submit to a reduction of a third, or a quarter, or a half, of their interest. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would take that matter into consideration.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he did not wish to go into the questions of high policy which had been discussed that night. The views he entertained differed somewhat from those of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); but he had no desire to outbid the hon. Member. He should, however, like to express the regret he felt that Her Majesty's Government had not been able to furnish the words of the Proclamation of Admiral Hewett and General Gordon, and to repudiate the version of it which had appeared in *The Standard*. There appeared to be some hesitation on the part of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject. If they had come to the conclusion that they were bound to defend Suakin against the attacks of people who were 10 miles away from that place, it would have been better to have taken up a position there, instead of going to El Teb and fighting a battle at a long distance from Suakin. At the same time, he was ready to admit that, from the point of view taken by Her Majesty's Government, it would be necessary to prevent any attack on the part of the tribes now assembled around Suakin. The Proclamation, however, which appeared in *The Standard* was, if authentic, a very important document. The words of the Proclamation were given between inverted commas, and nothing could be more widely different from the statement of Her Majesty's Government than the terms of that Proclamation. He was certainly surprised that the Government had not been able to repudiate the Proclamation altogether. The statement of the Prime Minister was materially different. The right hon. Gentleman only said that the tribes were warned that we intended to protect Suakin. He had not objected to that view as put forward by the Prime Minister; but in the text of the Proclamation, as transmitted by the Correspondent of *The Standard*, there was this—

> "You have already," said the Proclamation, "been warned that the English Force have come here, not only to relieve the garrison of Tokar, but to redress the wrongs under which you have so long suffered."

It was impossible to construe that into anything like the use of moral force; it could only mean physical force. The Proclamation went on to say—

> "Nevertheless, you have gone on trusting that notorious scoundrel, Osman Digna, well known to you all as a bad man, his former life in Suakin having proved that to be the case. He has led you away with the foolish idea that the Mahdi has come on earth. The great God who rules the Universe does not send such scoundrels as Osman Digna as His messengers. Your people are brave, and England always respects such men. Awake, then, chase Osman Digna from your country. We promise you that protection and pardon shall be granted to all who come in at once; otherwise the fate of those who fell at El Teb shall surely overtake you."

The Prime Minister had told them that there was to be no attack upon Osman Digna unless Osman Digna attacked the British Forces, and no vengeance; but, according to this version, protection was only to be given to all who came in at once, otherwise the fate of those who fell at El Teb was to overtake them. They were not called upon to disperse; but the Proclamation simply meant—"If you do not come in we will kill you." He was glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade make gestures, which seemed to indicate that those parts of the Proclamation which he had just read did not meet with his approval. He sincerely hoped that the Proclamation would be altogether repudiated by Her Majesty's Government. He need not dwell upon the utter absurdity of these naval and military gentlemen entering into theological questions in a Proclamation of this sort. Of course, the translation might be more or less inaccurate, and he hoped to hear that there was not the slightest truth in the fact that Admiral Hewett and General Graham had entered into any theological questions at all. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members might say "Oh!" and, for his part, he hoped the Proclamation was not true; and if there was a possibility of these naval and military gentlemen having entered into these theological questions, and of their having spoken of Osman Digna as a scoundrel, besides expressing their opinion that the great God who ruled the Universe did not send such messengers, it seemed to him that their representatives must have gone ridiculously wrong, and he trusted that another interpretation would be given to the Proclamation when it was produced by Her Majesty's Government. He was not prepared to take any great exception to the view of this matter which had been expressed by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War and the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, however, said emphatically that it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to withdraw from Egypt until they had effected the objects which were originally set forth as the objects of Her Majesty's Government — namely, the establishment of a strong, stable, and just Government there. But if they were to remain in Egypt until they set up a strong, stable, and just Government, it seemed to him that they would stay there until the end of time; and he had been sorry to hear Her Majesty's Government make a statement of that kind. For his own part, he hoped they would retire when they had set up a tolerable Native Government. He had said rather more than he had intended upon the question of high policy, and now he came to the point upon which he had originally intended to address the House—namely, the question of charge. His views on that point were very much in accord with those which had been expressed by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Macfarlane). He was one of those who had throughout this matter consistently opposed the use of force in Egypt. He was, therefore, in a far more consistent position than hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite, who, in his opinion, had never maintained any consistent policy at all. Hon. Members opposite had never joined his hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and himself in opposing the expedition to Egypt; but they wanted to make capital out of that expedition now, in order to worry and depreciate Her Majesty's Government. If Her Majesty's Government had got into a hole, it was not for him to show them the way out of it. They had gone into it of their own accord. If he could give them a little helping hand out of it he should be glad to do so. But, as a Representative of the taxpayers of the country, he thought he was bound to do his best to protect the interests of those taxpayers, and to show that no greater burden was imposed upon them than could be justly and honestly imposed. He was sorry to say that whatever Government was in power, whether Liberal or Conservative, there seemed to be too great a temptation, and too frequent a habit, of endeavouring to get out of a difficulty by putting the burden upon the unfortunate British taxpayer. Whether it was a quarrel between Newfoundland and the United States, or between Egypt and her rebellious subjects, the taxpayers of this country had still to pay the money. They were told that the fellaheen could not pay; that the bondholders would not pay; and, therefore, that the British taxpayer must pay. That was the only practical conclusion to which this Supplementary Estimate seemed to bring them. The Notice which he (Sir George Campbell) had placed upon the Paper was somewhat different from that which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had moved. His hon. Friend, as he (Sir George Campbell) understood, proposed to negative the whole of the Vote, with the exception of the items for the services of chaplains and nurses; whereas he (Sir George Campbell) had intended to move the reduction of the Vote for expenditure due to military operations by a sum of £109,050. He had not intended to ask the House to reject the item of £100,000 for the expedition to Suakin. He thought, under all the circumstances, that the taxpayers of this country were bound to pay the £100,000 asked for the expedition to save the lives of the garrisons. He admitted that the expedition had turned out to be an attempt to save people who did not want to be saved; and his own opinion had always been that it would be much better for the garrisons to save themselves in their own way. Like discreet and prudent men the garrison of Tokar had saved themselves. But he did not ignore the fact that the feeling of the country, in reference to saving the lives of the garrisons, was exceedingly strong; and as the expedition to Tokar had been undertaken for the purpose of saving life somebody must pay for the expense. The question was, who was to pay for it? He did not think it was fair to put the charge upon the fellaheen of Egypt. They could not pay it. Nor was he prepared to impose that part of the charge upon the bondholders. No one would tell them that the bondholders had any extremely sentimental desire to save the lives of the garrisons, and he did not think they would have undertaken the expedition on that account, and therefore the cost ought not to be put upon them; and as there was no one else to pay it, it became necessary that we should do so. Therefore, on that ground, he was of opinion that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who was to come after him, ought not to reject this charge, notwithstanding the fact that, so far as the expedition itself was concerned, it had turned out that instead of saving life the result was said to have been the sacrifice of the lives of some 2,500 Arabs, besides the loss of a considerable number of our own people. As a matter of sentiment, notwithstanding the loss of life, he thought they must pay for the expedition; and the Notice he had placed upon the Paper was intended to cut off the rest of the charge on account of military operations in Egypt—namely, £109,050. He had listened attentively to the statement of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War, and he was unable to gather from them why this sum was to be charged against the taxpayers of this country. It seemed to him that it must be paid, and perhaps it was inevitable that they should pay the ordinary cost of the British troops; but what he looked upon as unfair was that they should be required to pay the extraordinary cost of the maintenance of our troops in Egypt. If they were to remain there until a stable Government was established it was exceedingly probable that they would have to be reinforced, and that the whole arrangement would have to be revised. The bargain which was distinctly made between Her Majesty's Government and the House of Commons was that while the country might be charged with the ordinary expenses of the troops employed in Egypt, no extraordinary charge attending their employment was to be paid by the British taxpayer. It ought to fall upon the people connected with Egypt, including the gentlemen who had obtained from a Commission the enormous sum of upwards of £4,000,000 awarded to them in the shape of compensation for the losses they had suffered at Alexandria. It seemed to him, in the absence of any explanation whatever of this charge of £109,050 in excess of the £100,000 for the expedition to Suakin, that it ought not to receive the sanction of the House. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that they had not yet heard the last of these Estimates, and that they would be called upon to meet a good deal more if they once admitted the principle. He agreed with his hon. Friend that these charges ought to fall upon the bondholders, and that the charge for preserving and protecting the country should be the first charge before they paid the bondholders anything. No doubt the bondholders, at any rate, did not recognize this position, and it almost made his blood boil when he read the City articles in the newspapers on the subject. Whenever any misfortune happened in Egypt there was a cry of rejoicing on the part of the bondholders, and the bonds rose because they felt that every new misfortune would only make it more certain that the British Government would have to secure payment in the end. He thought the House of Commons could not too quickly undeceive the bondholders on that head. Before they heard anything of the military rebellion, there could be no doubt that the Dual Control was established to make the Egyptians pay as much as possible to the bondholders. Since then Nubar Pasha had come to the front. He was an able financier, no doubt, a foreigner, and, practically, an agent of the bondholders.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must confine himself to the Question before the Committee—namely, the military expenditure in Egypt.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that if that was so right hon. and hon. Members on both Front Benches had gone considerably wide of the mark, and he hoped he was not trespassing nearly as much as they had done. He was urging as a reason why this money should not be laid on the taxpayer of this country, but should be laid on the bondholders, that Egypt was being administered by agents of the bondholders. Nubar Pasha and Mr. Vincent were the agents of the bondholders imported from Paris and from Constantinople. His contention was that the bondholders were, to all intents and purposes, creditors who were in possession of a sequestrated estate, and that, therefore, this extraordinary charge should be imposed on the estate, and not on the British taxpayers. In order to simplify the position, he would take the case of an insolvent estate. He would suppose an estate of that kind protected from the encroachment of the sea by a dyke. Supposing the sea broke through that dyke and threatened the whole estate, and some expense was incurred in repairing the mischief, would the creditors of that estate be paid in full? By no means. Money would have been paid by the estate to save the estate, and that was the principle which ought to be applied to Egypt. Her Majesty's Government might tell him that, although agreeing with him in principle, his view could not be carried out on account of the Law of Liquidation; but he denied that proposition altogether; and it seemed to him that the only force which had been given to it was due to a somewhat imprudent assertion on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers. He denied that there was any international agreement on this subject. He did not see why the claims of the Egyptian bondholders should be enforced by the arms of England, any more than the bonds of Turkey, or Peru, or of any other insolvent State. The Law of Liquidation was nothing more than a composition between Egypt and her creditors. The original agreement for International Courts had come to an end; and it seemed to him that, Courts or no Courts, the simple fact was—as had been stated by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macfarlane)—that Egypt was again insolvent. The sea had broken in through the dyke, and they must save the estate. This view of the matter should be faced at once. They must say to Foreign Powers—"Either we must all pay the cost of the estate, and undertake to protect it by an international agreement, or Egypt must be left to the Egyptians, leaving the creditors to take their chance like the creditors of all other estates." He would not object to a neutralization of the Canal, and its protection by international agreement; but there were difficulties in the way which rendered it unlikely that that arrangement would be carried into effect. Then, as to their leaving Egypt to herself, the only fear was that if they left it France alone would take possession of it. For his own part, he did not think anything of the kind would occur. He believed the French people, as distinguished from the French Press, were a thoroughly peaceful people, and would not allow their Government to do anything of the kind.

The CHAIRMAN: I must again call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that he is not confining his observations to the subject before the Committee. He is certainly giving a much greater development to the phase of the subject with which he is dealing than any other Member has done.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he would strongly advise Her Majesty's Government to say boldly to the creditors of Egypt that before they were paid the necessary expenses of the administration of the country must be defrayed. He wished now only to say one or two words with regard to the views of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War (Colonel Stanley) and his hon. Friend the junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). The policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Soudan was simply that they proposed to abandon it. He did not undertake to say whether that was a right or a wrong policy. He was not prepared to say it was wrong; and he would ask the Conservative Party whether they were prepared to support the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War in what appeared to be his wish, in a roundabout sort of way, to retain the Soudan either for Egypt or for England? He had sometimes compared Her Majesty's Government to an elephant in a quicksand. How was the elephant to be got out of the quicksand?

It certainly could not be done by poking it and prodding it. That course, which only forced it into greater difficulties, appeared to be the object of hon. Members opposite. They only asked Her Majesty's Government to explain what their policy was in order that they might attack it whatever it might be. ["No, no!"] Yes; and that had been especially the case in regard to Teb? Until it was known that the British troops were going to advance on Teb the Conservative organs howled at Her Majesty's Government. The advance took place, and the Conservative organs turned round and cried out—"What a horrible bloodguilty Government this is." The Chairman had warned him that he was not to take the licence which had been taken by hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches in going into the general question. His own impression had been that the general question was to be discussed that night. He should be glad, however, if the Chairman would allow him, to say one word in regard to the statement of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). The hon. Member had made a statement the other evening, which he must confess had hurt him very much. Generally speaking, he agreed with the hon. Member on this question; but the hon. Member had said that Her Majesty's Government had sent into Egypt a set of Anglo-Indian officials, whose Anglo-Indian ideas had caused all the harm which had occurred. He denied that altogether. His contention was that Her Majesty's Government had not followed Anglo-Indian ideas in Egypt, but had, on the contrary, followed the crudest English ideas. The Army had not been officered by a Sepoy Commander, but by one of English experience, who had been assisted by raw English officers, ignorant of the language and the manners of the Natives. No Native Army in India could have subsisted under such a system. As to the Civil administration, that seemed to be under Mr. Clifford Lloyd. He denied that this gentleman was an Indian official. They knew nothing about him in India, although he (Sir George Campbell) believed that during a part of his life he had been employed in a very subordinate capacity as an uncovenanted servant in Burmah. Mr. Clifford Lloyd had been in Ireland; but Her Majesty's Government had not succeeded in that country until they had got a real Anglo-Indian official to work under Lord Spencer. He repeated that it was the crude English system of importing lawyers with usurers behind them, and such like, into the country that had caused all the evil; and he maintained that if they had tried that system in the Punjaub, he, for one, would not have been here at this moment, because the Natives would have risen and cut the throats of the English officials. He would not weary the Committee by going further into the subject. He would only say again that, while he was ready, on the part of his constituents, to pay £100,000, he objected to putting on the country the £109,050 which was included in the Vote. He hoped the Committee would reject that charge, in order that Her Majesty's Government might be induced fairly to face the question, and to insist on placing the expenditure on the shoulders of the bondholders, whose property had been saved by their operations.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD said, he embraced that early opportunity for addressing a few words to the Committee, because the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was enabled, towards the commencement of the Sitting, to inform the House that Her Majesty's Government had received congratulations from a group of Foreign Powers. His object in rising was to ask the noble Lord upon what subject Her Majesty's Government had received those congratulations, and whether any of the Great Foreign Powers had omitted to join in them? He should be glad, if possible, to be able to participate in the feelings which had been expressed. Had Her Majesty's Government been congratulated upon the slaughter of several thousand men which had taken place in the Soudan; upon the fact that they had adopted a more responsible and definite policy; or upon the sudden development of the "plan" which the Prime Minister had alluded to in the early part of the Session—a plan which, up to that moment, had been shrouded in mystery? He desired to know—and he felt sure that many would share in that desire—whether that plan was founded and fashioned upon the lines of the policy which the Prime Minister had adumbrated, and, more than that, which he had passionately declared to be the policy which would actuate him for all time—namely, the policy of encouraging struggling nationalities? He ventured to think that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had since that time been more or less embarrassed by the recollection of the "hands off" policy of the Prime Minister as declared in in Mid Lothian; that they found it difficult to shake themselves clear of that defined and declared policy; and, further, that the Prime Minister had been torn with remorse at the lives which had been lost, and the blood which had been shed, in the pursuit of a policy which was in diametric opposition to the policy with which the Government came into Office—that was to say, the restoration of the rights of nationalities. But there was an alternative policy which it was possible, but improbable, that Her Majesty's Government had before them. He could scarcely believe, even after reading the Proclamations of General Gordon, Her Majesty's Agent in the Soudan, that the commercial interests of slave dealers could have actuated the Government in their present course of action. He thought he had special justification in calling the attention of the Committee to General Gordon's early Proclamation, because the words of the Prime Minister still rang in his ears. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman last week whether Her Majesty's Government had seen fit to disclaim the principle apparently contained in General Gordon's Proclamation with reference to slavery, and the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was—

> "We have not disclaimed any portion of the Proclamation of General Gordon, because we are perfectly certain that such a Proclamation has never been issued."

He (Mr. Coleridge Kennard) had waited until now, and he ventured to ask the Prime Minister whether he would declare then, as he declared on the occasion referred to, that he still disbelieved in the reality of the Proclamation? They had been referred, on various occasions, to the complications which had attended the negotiations of Her Majesty's Government. He held in his hand a Paper which had been issued to the House, and from which it appeared that, on the 11th of June, Lord Granville wrote as follows:—

> "The Italian Ambassador has paid me a visit at Walmer Castle, and during his stay there I had some conversation with him on Egyptian affairs. His Excellency assured me that the Italian Government desired, as heretofore, to maintain a friendly attitude and to support the policy of Her Majesty's Government in that country. I said that we still adhered to the intentions we had publicly announced, and that our policy was, however, of a somewhat elastic character, and must, to a certain extent, be guided by circumstances."

It was to the elastic character of the policy of Her Majesty's Government that he (Mr. Coleridge Kennard) desired to call the attention of the Committee. Lord Granville continues—

> "I informed him that we had been on the point of withdrawing the British garrison from Cairo, and of considerably reducing the total of our forces. . . . But whilst giving the Khedive advice, we felt bound to assure His Highness that we were prepared to defend Egypt Proper from outside attack."

He asked Her Majesty's Government to explain Lord Granville's sentence. Was its meaning that they had entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, in respect of Egypt Proper; in short, whether this did not constitute a Protectorate? If not, what was the meaning of Lord Granville's words? But it appeared that at last Her Majesty's Government were understood by Foreign Powers to have a definite policy, and he hoped it was of a more responsible and energetic character. Lord Granville, it appeared, had received a visit from the Austrian Ambassador also, and his despatch on the subject was to the effect that His Excellency had had with him a conversation on Egyptian affairs to the same effect as that which Lord Granville had with the Italian Ambassador; that Count Karolyi asked whether any communication had passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Turkey or France with regard to the Soudan. He (Mr. Coleridge Kennard) asked the attention of the Committee to what followed. Lord Granville said—

> "After receiving my reply in the negative' His Excellency went on to say that the Austrian Government perfectly understood our position in Egypt, and wished that our troops might not be withdrawn until there was every security that the change could be effected without danger to the security and tranquillity of the country."

Lord Granville did not appear to have said to the Austrian Ambassador, as he had to the Italian Ambassador—namely, that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to defend Egypt from outside attack. The policy of Her Majesty's Government seemed to have become rather mixed about that time. Then there was the despatch in which Lord Granville stated that the French Ambassador had called on him on the 15th of June.

The CHAIRMAN said, he must point out to the hon. Member that the question before the Committee was the reduction of the Vote. Although, no doubt, the question of the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government had been referred to in the speeches of several hon. Members, the hon. Member was going a great deal beyond the observations which had been made on that subject in the course of the discussion.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD said, he was, of course, desirous of confining his observations within the proper limits. Having in his hand a Paper which had been issued to Members on Egyptian affairs, he thought that a few observations upon that subject might not be out of place. He had referred to the despatches of Lord Granville detailing his conversations with the Italian and Austrian Ambassadors, and he would ask whether he might be permitted to refer to the despatch relating to the visit of the French Ambassador?

The CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the hon. Member that the furtherance of the Rules and Regulations of Debate was for the convenience of the House. It was hardly necessary to say that if every hon. Member were to read such copious extracts there would really be no possibility of getting through the Business of the Committee. The hon. Member would, of course, be able to judge whether the observations he had to make were in the spirit of the Rules.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD said, he had but small experience of the Rules of the House, and he should readily submit to the ruling of the Chair. He would now pass to the question of money in connection with the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. Lord Granville said he had stated to the French Ambassador that it was clear that the Egyptian Government were incapable of holding Khartoum, and that he was convinced that public opinion would not countenance a considerable expenditure of money, or the risk of loss of life, which must result from an expedition of English troops with that object. Now, he ventured to urge upon the Committee that Her Majesty's Government, in asking for this grant of money, were doing the very thing which Lord Granville had deprecated. A considerable expenditure of money had been incurred in the teeth of Lord Granville's despatch, and a considerable loss of life had attended the expedition to the Soudan; and it was upon their own words that Her Majesty's Government would be judged, because they had gone directly contrary to the declaration of Lord Granville to the French Ambassador. His desire to avoid anything in the nature of an infringement of the Rules made him unwilling to trouble the Committee with further references, or to enter more fully than he had done into this subject; and he would, therefore, conclude by a further appeal to right hon. Gentlemen opposite to state upon what ground Her Majesty's Government had received the congratulations of Foreign Powers.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he looked upon this Vote as representing but a small proportion of the money that would have to be spent before they could withdraw from Egypt. He confessed he had never looked upon the occupation of Egypt with any degree of satisfaction; indeed, he was ill af ease when he found that the speeches ot the right hon. Gentlemen below him made no mention whatever of the expenditure that would be incurred on account of the force required to be in Egypt. For his own part, he did not believe that they could carry out the occupation of Egypt and provide for the many reliefs required for the efficiency of our scattered forces, with a smaller force than 30,000 men added to the Army at home, including therein the depôts; and how far the country would be content to allow the large consequent increase of military expenditure remained to be seen. He had always considered that the Prime Minister had shown great wisdom in endeavouring to set up a stable Government in Egypt as the only means of getting rid of the occupation of that country. They had quite as many Mahommedans to govern in India as they knew what to do with; and he said it was not desirable to try to extend their rule over the Mussulmans of Egypt. With regard to the movement of General Graham, he thought that, so far from being objected to on political grounds, it must be regarded as a purely military operation, and one which had been well carried out. In conclusion, he expressed his firm conviction that the sooner they got out of Egypt the more satisfaction it would eventually be to the country.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was anxious to make a few observations upon this very important subject, and he must thank his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) for the clear and lucid statement in which he had placed the case before the Committee. He had been exceedingly surprised at the answer given to that statement by the Prime Minister; but, before going into that part of the question, he desired to say one word with regard to the statement of the noble Marquess who introduced this Vote to the Committee. The noble Marquess had, in a very perfunctory way, slurred over the whole of this important question. When he knew that the subject of Egypt would be introduced the noble Marquess intimated that the present Vote afforded a convenient opportunity for the discussion; but he gave no intimation whatever of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, although he was aware that the great object of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) in placing his Motion on the Paper was that Supplies should be stopped until some definite reply on the part of Her Majesty's Government was forthcoming. That reply was still pressed for from the noble Marquess. But there was another omission in the noble Marquess's speech to which his right and gallant Friend had alluded. Whatever they might think in other respects of the action which had been recently fought, it was quite certain that no Army ever conducted itself better, did its duty better, or was commanded better, under very difficult and dangerous circumstances. He believed that everyone in that House would agree with this statement; and, as an old soldier, he was glad to bear his testimony to the gallantry which their troops had displayed. The Prime Minister had told them that it was a very unwise thing, in a discussion of this kind, to go back to ancient history; he said the House was sick of hearing about Hicks Pasha, and the different events which had occurred in Egypt. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was not above stating that the whole of those misfortunes had arisen from the policy of his Predecessors in Office. If that was not going back to ancient history he was unable to understand the meaning of the term. Was it not a fact that the main argument which the Party opposite addressed to the constituencies at the last General Election amounted to this—" If you will replace the present Government we will produce a very different state of things?" The result had shown that the first part of their programme was peace—" Peace at any price." But he would call the attention of the Committee to the two actions which had been fought. He asked, whether the prestige of Ministers was not as low as it could be before Tel-el-Kebir? Where would that prestige have been if that battle had not been fought and won? The Ministry was at that time discredited, not only on the ground of that disgraceful retreat in South Africa, but on many other accounts. In order to understand the position at the time of Tel-el-Kebir it was necessary to go back to the day when the French and English Fleets sailed so proudly into the harbour at Alexandria, and to remember that those Fleets went there for the express purpose of protecting life and property. It was well-known that the order given by the Government was that not a man should be landed; and when the massacre of 400 people took place in the streets of Alexandria, they were not prepared to hold out to the citizens a helping hand. They stood by and did nothing, and that, he maintained, was the cause of all that had happened since. They well remembered how, just before the bombardment of Alexandria, the French Fleet hoisted its flags and sails and sailed away. He asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War where was the Dual Control then? As a matter of fact, they were masters of the whole situation; and everything that happened afterwards was the result of the action of this country, and not of any Ducal Control. Let him go one step further. He recollected reading a despatch written by Sir Edward Malet, and in the latter part of which some remarkable words of Dervish Pasha were quoted. Dervish Pasha had been sent to Egypt as Turkish High Commissioner, and what did Dervish Pasha say to him? He said—

> "I have brought Arabi into Alexandria; I have got the Egyptian Army in Alexandria to be under your control."

What was the meaning of that? Why, the meaning of it was that after the bombardment of Alexandria—if Her Majesty's Government had done that which any reasonable Government would have done, which the present Opposition would have done if they had been in power—there should have been a force of 5,000, or 6,000, or 10,000 men landed, in which case Arabi would have laid down his arms, and no further expenditure would have been incurred. As it was Arabi escaped, and the battle of Tel-el-Kebir followed. The noble Marquess, speaking at the Lord Mayor's dinner, gave it as his opinion that Arabi was not a great General, and that the troops they had overthrown were not of any particular value. Only very recently additional evidence had been afforded of the cowardice of the men they confronted at Tel-el-Kebir. Well, having annihilated the Army in Egypt by force, Her Majesty's Government maintained their authority in Egypt solely by force. They upset every institution in the country, and yet they had not the pluck or the courage to state what they had done; they endeavoured to relieve themselves of that responsibility which alone rested on them by saying that they were merely supporting the Khedive's Government to carry out the various reforms. He heard the Prime Minister the other night make one of the most extraordinary statements he ever heard any man make. The right hon. Gentleman said that one of the reasons why Her Majesty's Government were so embarrassed was on account of the legacies, especially with regard to the maintenance of the authority of the Khedive, that had been left to them by the late Government. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) asked whether it was politic for a man in the position of the right hon. Gentleman to condemn, especially at a time of such difficulty as the present, the previous Government for supporting the Khedive? The words of the Prime Minister were very clear upon the subject. He stated that if he had been in the position of the late Government he would not have supported the Khedive. In the interest of Egypt a more unfortunate statement could not possibly have been made in the House of Commons. But the right hon. Gentleman said more; he said that so long as they remained in Egypt, so long as they had control in Egypt, it was only a Dual Control—it was shared by the Khedive and Her Majesty's Government—and it was a violation of International Law to depart from that state of things. Why, if there had ever been violations of International Law, they consisted in the bombardment of Alexandria and the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. It would certainly not be a violation of International Law for the Government to state—"We have conquered; and until we have re-established order in Egypt we shall command in Egypt, and we shall put on one side the Government which we know and feel to be ineffectual and unable to do its work." Still, there was something more than that. He desired the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War to consider whether it was fair that a country like Egypt should be called upon to support two Governments, with all their costly apparatus? Her Majesty's Government had established themselves in Egypt; they were giving high salaries to the best men they could find—no one found fault with them for doing that—but they had not assumed the responsibility attaching to them. They ought to let the world know they were doing that which they were bound to do — namely, having occupied the country, they meant to govern it until it could find a good Government for itself. He ventured to say that all Her Majesty's Government's so-called reforms, notwithstanding what the Prime Minister had said, had, with perhaps one exception, signally failed. They had brought under taxation the salaries of officials belonging to other nations which formerly were not subject to taxation; but in every other instance the efforts at reform made by Her Majesty's Government had signally failed. Let them consider the cases of the Army and the Police. What did Her Majesty's Government do in respect to the Army? They would not allow Turks or Arnaouts to be enlisted; but they brought up the unfortunate fellaheen, and forced them into the Army? The fellaheen made as worthless soldiers as could be found; indeed, their worthlessness had been sufficiently proved within the last few weeks. If the Egyptian Army was all the Government had declared it to be, surely it would have been a wise and proper step to have sent a regiment or two to fight side by side with the British troops now engaged in the Soudan. The Government would then have seen what the Egyptian Army was worth—whether it was worth any confidence at all. While he was talking about the Army let him mention one fact. The Government had moved some troops to Assouan. He did not know whether they amounted to one regiment or two regiments, or a brigade, because the Government had not told the Committee. It was, however, known that some English troops had been sent in support. Supposing an attack was made upon the Egyptian troops, and the English soldiers were kept in the background, would it not be regarded as an attack upon the English Army which had been made? If the enemy were victorious, what would Her Majesty's Government have to do? Why, they would have to send more British soldiers to the front. The Committee ought not to be deceived in this matter. If Egyptian troops were sent to the front, British soldiers would have to be sent to look after them. That was what the Government were really doing, knowing, as they did, the weakness of the Army they were supporting. He advised the Government not to try to escape from the responsibilities of their acts. He had no desire to go further into the Dual Control than to say that every one of the men who were acting for the Egyptian Government, from Nubar Pasha downwards, looked to the English Government for information as to what was going to happen; and part of the information imparted was that, as soon as possible, the English would leave the country. Under such circumstances, how could they expect reforms to go on; how could they expect the Egyptian officials to carry out that which Her Majesty's Government believed to be right, when the officials knew that the changes were offensive to all the men with whom they would have hereafter to deal? As a matter of fact, the Egyptian officials would do the work of reform grudgingly; and the very moment the backs of the English were turned, the old system would be revived; indeed, it was very probable things would become much worse than they were now. Would the Egyptian Army ever be fit? That was a question which ought to be considered most carefully. He was of opinion that the Army would not become efficient for a very considerable time. As to the Police, there was one answer which the House had never yet received from Her Majesty's Government, and he should like to have it that night. Why was it that they allowed the Police to go to Suakin, and from there, under Baker Pasha, to Trinkitat, and from there to the battle of Teb? Why did they not send part of their Regular Egyptian Army? They said their Regular Army was meant only for Egypt; but they had taken the Littoral of the Red Sea, and Suakin was to be part of Egypt. Their argument, therefore, fell to the ground. His own firm belief was that the Government meant to finesse to the very last. They would not send the Egyptian Army to the relief of Sinkat and Tokar, because it was commanded by British officers; but they sent the Police, who were commanded by a man not now a British soldier. The Government allowed Baker Pasha to go without taking any of those precautions which they might have taken, and ought to have taken. The relieving force was sent too late to save Sinkat. They allowed Tewfik, a most courageous man, who stuck to his post to the very last, and his brave little garrison, to be massacred, together with hundreds of poor women and children. It was not until this country cried out, and said what a discredit was being cast upon the English Government and upon the English nation by the proceedings in the Soudan, that the Government made up their minds to send a force for the relief of Tokar. It was this change of policy which earned for the Government the majority in the Division a few nights ago. Had they not altered their policy there were many men on their own side who would have voted against them, notably, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who said that the Government had mended their ways, and therefore he was prepared at the last moment to give them his support. These were matters now of history; but it was well they should be remembered. He asserted that if the Government had done their duty in the first instance there would have been no necessity to shed blood; they would have had a bloodless victory. The whole Egyptian Question would have been settled in a very easy way. Now they found themselves in the midst of the greatest complications. It might be no consolation to the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who sat upon the Treasury Bench; but he could not help feeling that a generation at least must elapse before men would be found in Egypt fit to govern that country. What did Her Majesty's Government go to Egypt for? It was absurd to say they went for any other reason than to protect their own interests. They went to Egypt to protect the Suez Canal; to see that the highway to India was safe. No doubt the question of good government cropped up afterwards; but the security of the Canal was the main object of their going to Egypt. And now they found that matters had got into such a state that it would be very difficult for them to retire He was most anxious that they should not retire. He was anxious they should not retire, not only in the interest of Egypt, but in the interest in this country. He recollected reading in the newspapers, and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War would be able presently to state whether it was correct or not, that, in the first instance, Her Majesty's Government not only meant to give up the whole of the interior of the Soudan, but they meant to give up Suakin. He also heard, at the same time, that France was delighted at the idea of a port on the Red Sea being given up. He humbly, but earnestly, asked the Committee to consider what might arise supposing they were in a great hurry to leave Egypt. What would please the French nation more than that they should go to the relief of Egypt; what would please them more than that they should have a Protectorate over Egypt and the Littoral of the Red Sea? It was their day dream, and their night dream to have the whole of the North of Africa and Syria under their domination; and, therefore, it was that he thought it was most extraordinary that the Prime Minister should say the other night that they meant to remain at Suakin for a short time, and that mainly to prevent the spread of the Slave Trade. That seemed to him to be the most remarkable utterance ever made by a Prime Minister of this country; because at the very time it was made an Envoy of the Government was at Khartoum encouraging the Slave Trade, and Kordofan and Darfour had been handed over to Sultans who were the very life and soul of slavery. The brother-in-law of the Mahdi was to be placed in power, and he was one of the greatest slave dealers in the world. How, therefore, was the increase of the Slave Trade to be prevented if the country was to be handed over to the tender mercies of the Mahdi and his followers? But there was another very serious consideration in regard to the Soudan. Why were they to say, at the first blush, that the whole of the Soudan must be evacuated? He could understand the evacuation of Kordofan and Darfour; but why were Khartoum and Sennaar and Kassala to be given up? He was glad to see that at last, after grave consideration, Her Majesty's Government were thinking of making an ally of King John of Abyssinia, and of giving him an outlet into the Red Sea. If they had done that sooner, they might have rescued by this time the garrisons in the South, because they might have been able to retire through Abyssinia without any difficulty whatever. Upon an occasion like the present it was very difficult to go into all the matters one naturally wished to go into. The questions, however, which had been raised in the course of the evening ought to be debated till the Committee got from the Government an assurance as to their intentions, which up to the present moment they had not received. All that they had heard from the Government was—"We mean at the very first opportunity to leave Egypt; we mean, as soon as possible, to withdraw our troops." [General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] Yes; his hon. and gallant Friend cried "Hear, hear!" but then he always cried "Hear, hear!" to everything that was said in the House. The Government had been questioned as to Hicks Pasha's expedition; but they had not as yet returned an answer. They professed to know nothing about that expedition; but it was his belief that they knew everything about it. The right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had asked—"Could we have prevented General Hicks from going into Kordofan after having been so victorious in Sennaar?" Did the Committee imagine that the Egyptian Government would for one moment have consented to abandon the Soudan, if their troops had not been completely thrashed? As a matter of fact, Her Majesty's Government were fully aware of what had happened, and was happening, in the Soudan. Knowing what the Egyptian troops were worth, they allowed Hicks Pasha to go to certain destruction before they could make up their minds that they would proclaim that Kordofan and Darfour was no longer to belong to Egypt. But in proclaiming the evacuation of the Soudan, surely they had taken a great deal upon themselves. As a matter of fact, they had taken upon themselves the sole control of Egyptian affairs; otherwise how could they proclaim the abandonement of the Soudan, which up to that time was part and parcel of Egypt? The Prime Minister made a distinction between Egypt Proper and the Soudan; but he showed that there was some affinity between the two by sending troops to Assouan. In conclusion, he asked for a distinct statement from someone in authority as to what were the intentions of the Government; because, to say that they intended to stop in Egypt until things were quiet and, at the same time, to say that the Khedive's Government was responsible, was equivalent to saying, so far as they could by words say, they themselves were not responsible. He held Her Majesty's Government to be absolutely responsible for the administration of Egyptian affairs; and he pointed out that if the Government wished to have Egypt quiet, contented, and prosperous, they must at once declare their intentions; they must boldly declare that they meant to hold Egypt until they found that they could hand it over to a strong and satisfactory Government, a Government which would be a safeguard and protection to the people.

MR. VILLIERS STUART said, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) charged Her Majesty's Government with throwing the finances of Egypt into confusion. Now, he (Mr. Villiers Stuart) ventured to reply that it was not Her Majesty's Government, but Arabi Pasha, who had caused the crisis in the Egyptian finances, and that if Arabi's career had not been stopped, the ruin of Egypt would have been consummated. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Macfarlane), and other hon. Members, had attributed the demand which had been made by Her Majesty's Government for a Vote on this occasion to the fact that Egypt could not afford to pay the sum required herself. But as the object of the present military expedition was to prevent Suakin, and other ports on the Red Sea, from falling into the hands of any Foreign Power, and to secure our road to India, he (Mr. Villiers Stuart) asserted that those considerations, and not any financial considerations, were the real reasons why England was asked, and justly, to agree to this Vote. Egypt had already contributed too much. What was their object in going to Egypt? It was to maintain the safety of their route to India; and as Suakin and the other ports of the Red Sea were part and parcel of their road to India, why should Egypt be required to pay any portion of the expense incurred? As to the finances of Egypt, he maintained that the country was perfectly able to weather the present crisis, without sacrificing her credit and without failing in any of her obligations. Her financial position would have been decidedly satisfactory but for the trying crisis through which she had been, and was still, passing. The only wonder was that, under the circumstances, she had stood the strain as well as she had. The most embarrassing element in her financial position had been the compensation awarded for the destruction of property during the burning of Alexandria. He regretted that it was thought necessary to admit the claims for compensation; but there was no use in crying over spilt milk. The Commission had been notoriously generous in the awards it had made. He was told that, in many instances, the sums awarded for ruined buildings had been larger than the houses originally cost. It seemed to him very questionable whether it was fair to throw upon the unfortunate peasantry, already so heavily taxed, the cost of the havoc caused not by any orders of theirs, but by the orders of the rebel Chiefs, by whose proceedings they had suffered quite as severely in proportion as the merchants of Alexandria had. Both the awards granted by the Commission and the cost of the military operations in the Soudan were but temporary causes of disorder. When these temporary causes had passed away there were plenty of hopeful elements in the future. The loss of the Soudan had been a gain to Egypt. Her Majesty's Government had done yeoman service to Egypt in causing the severance of the connection between Egypt and the Soudan. The Soudan had been an everlasting strain upon the resources of Egypt, inasmuch as it had involved the maintenance of a large Army and of numerous depôts; it had involved Egypt in many petty wars with her neighbours. The only persons who profited by Egypt's occupation of the Soudan were the army of officials who were quartered in the country. Those officials were far away from Cairo, and they enjoyed unrestricted indulgence in tyranny and rapacity. There was a still more important respect in which Egypt would gain by the loss of her Equatorial Provinces. The retention of the Soudan involved the maintenance of a standing Army of more than 30,000 men. The mortality amongst the troops was very great, and the conscription necessary to keep up the numbers was most exhausting; he had heard that as many as 500 men each month were required to fill up the gaps. Perhaps the most cruel of the burdens which the unfortunate peasantry of Egypt had to bear was the conscription, because they lived in constant dread of being dragged in chains to serve in the Soudan. They regarded the condemnation to serve in the Soudan as equivalent to a sentence of death. The country suffered a very heavy loss by the fact of labourers being drawn in such large numbers from the cultivation of the land; he should assess the loss to the country under this head alone at £600,000 a-year, putting the value of each man's service at £20 a-year. After the temporary disturbance had come to an end Egyptian finance would be at once relieved, and there would be increased production, the peasantry being left to till the soil instead of being sent to the South in chains never to return. Another hopeful feature was the rapid development of prosperity which would follow a more reasonable system of taxation; but it was not only that production would be increased, but they might look forward to a diminished cost of administration when the system of taxation was simplified. There were 53,000 officials employed, each of whom was in his own sphere a petty tyrant, and the cost of these was £1,640,000; but if the cost of these were heavy to the Government, it was far heavier to the people, because it was eked out by levying black mail upon the unfortunate peasantry. With the indulgence of the Committee he would narrate a significant incident exemplifying the tyranny of these men. A farmer went to the Government offices and paid his tax, and having obtained his receipt he was leaving the building when a Saraff, or orderly officer, stopped him and required him to pay a second time. He produced his receipt, but the Saraff refused to recognize it, and he was arrested and bastinadoed.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is exceeding the limits of legitimate debate upon the question before the Committee.

Mr. VILLIERS STUART apologized to the Committee; but, as several hon. Members had been discussing the finances of Egypt, he wished to show what her prospect of solvency was.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON said, that, on rising to address the House for the first time, he ventured to claim to the full the kind indulgence of the Committee; and he believed he should not make the appeal in vain, if hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, who were now practised debaters, would recall to their memories the feelings with which they first addressed the greatest Representative Assembly in the world He felt that some apology was due from him for intervening so early in the debates; but he thought that perhaps such an apology might be found in the fact that he had twice been in the country which was the subject of debate, and had attempted to learn as much of the language of the country as would enable him to converse with the inhabitants, and so learn their views upon the questions of the day. He had been very much struck with those views, and he held that they had a very important bearing on the question of what our policy should be in Egypt. In holding that view he thought he might appeal to the principle maintained by hon. Members on both sides of the House, and especially by hon. Members on the opposite side, that Native populations ought to have a considerable, if not a paramount, voice in the question of who should govern them. He had been surprised to find that the opinion of the fellaheen in Egypt was very much in favour of that country being placed in some form or other under the protection of England. He was surprised to find that they knew sufficient of current politics to take that view of the question, and he found that their reason was this—their requirements were just laws and just taxation, and they found in this country, and in this country alone, a guarantee that a Mahommedan population could be ruled by a Christian Empire with just laws and just taxation. He was further surprised by the extraordinary fertility of the country, which everyone was aware of, but which must be seen to be appreciated. Once a-year the Nile became both landlord and tenant of the country; once a-year he retired from his holding without claiming any compensation for improvements. The fellaheen were an extremely laborious population; and that fact, together with the richness of the soil, ought to make it easy for any country, that undertook the Protectorate of it, to govern Egypt. These two facts formed a great portion of the indictment against Her Majesty's Government for not having been able to ameliorate the finances of the country, but rather having left them in a worse condition than they found them in. He had hoped that the Committee would hear that night, in the speech of the Prime Minister, some indication of what his policy was to be with regard to the future. He had listened, of course, with great admiration to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but he must say also with some disappointment, because he could find no indication of any policy whatever, or that he had taken either that House or the country into his confidence. But there were certain portions of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that had deserved something more in the way of notice from this side of the House than what he had been pleased to call incoherent groans. The Prime Minister told us that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) had proved only what Hicks Pasha must have thought of his instructions, and not what he did think; but he should have thought that one less skilled in metaphysical subtleties must know that the two things meant the same. If it was proved what a man must think, surely that proved what he did think. The right hon. Gentleman complained that by the action of the late Government this country was pledged to support the Khedive and his Government; but his contention was that if they had adequately supported the Khedive at the right moment they would never have been in their present position. If the Government had given the Khedive that adequate support which hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House would have been willing to give him, Arabi's movement would never have reached such a head that it was necessary to bombard Alexandria. There was another matter which he thought needed some explanation. The right hon. Gentleman had said that they would remain in Egypt until their work was done, and that the House was sick of hearing that from the lips of Her Majesty's Government. He stated also that they were not doing their own work in Egypt, but some one else's work, although he did not say who that someone else was. Then the position of the Government was that we were to remain in Egypt until that someone else's work was done, but who that someone else was was not defined. For his part, he thought the money of this country was not to be used to do someone else's work, but to do our own. He thought also that the Prime Minister had been somewhat unfair to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who preceded him (Colonel Stanley) with regard to the Soudan. He assumed that there were only two alternatives as to the government of the Soudan, and he said they were to hand over the government of the Soudan either to the Khedive or to the Government of Her Majesty the Queen. He ventured to think he could show that there was a third alternative which should be adopted; but what surprised him most in the speech of the Prime Minister was the solemn warning he addressed to the House against the possibility of this country engaging itself in the government of Mahommedans. He had expected that the right hon. Gentleman would go on to the logical conclusion of that argument, and say they ought to give up the government of India. Had the right hon. Gentleman forgotten that India was the greatest Mahommedan country, and that this country was, therefore, the greatest Mahommedan Power? But while he had looked in vain for any indication of a policy beyond what the right hon. Gentleman had already vouchsafed to the House, he thought they must require a firm and decided policy by the Government before they could agree to this Vote. In the absence of such an indication, he thought he should be justified in going back to the past for an indication of policy; but he would not do so for two reasons—first, because the future had such grave issues that they might well confine themselves to the future; and, secondly, because the late policy of the Government, to which he could alone refer, had been dead and buried for some weeks. It had been the subject of an all but unanimous Vote of Want of Confidence throughout the country. The Government had passed a Vote of Censure upon themselves by a reversal of their policy, and he ventured to say that that House had passed a real, though not a numerical, Vote of Censure on the Government upon the last occasion when the question was tried. ["No, no!"] He could perfectly well understand hon. Gentlemen opposite dissenting from that view, and he admitted its historical inaccuracy; but perhaps he might borrow from the Prime Minister an expression which he had introduced, and say it was a Vote of Censure in its nature, though not in its form. He was thinking rather of the speeches than of the votes of some right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite; but, as he had said, the late policy of the Government was dead and buried, and it was not his intention to exhume it merely in order to gibbet it. They must look to the future, and ask for some indication and declaration on the part of the Government; but there were certain questions that could not now be ignored. He had been talking about the Government of Egypt; but he was not sure that either he, or the House, or the country, understood what the Government of Egypt was at the present moment. Was it the Khedive, alternately dependent and independent? Was it Her Majesty's Government, alternately responsible and irresponsible? Or was it the Sultan, the Suzerain of Egypt—he believed hon. Gentlemen opposite were fond of that title—whom, he would venture to say, the Government had relegated to the position of something like a Registrar-General of the loss of his own Provinces? They were entitled to ask what the Government of Egypt was to be in the future? They were also entitled to ask one question, and that was whether this country was going to continue to crown the Mahdi with the one hand and to chastise his followers with the other? Were they going to continue to follow the policy indicated by the Prime Minister with regard to Suakin—that they must hold it, because otherwise it might become an avenue of the Slave Trade? That was what the right hon. Gentleman said in answer to the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), when this question was last raised. Were they to continue to support that policy on the one hand, and to support the Slave Trade at Khartoum on the other? The Committee were entitled to ask whether the money they were about to vote was to go to make a crown for the Mahdi, or a bowstring for Osman Digna; or was it to go to strike the fetters from off the slaves when they reached Suakin, or to rivet them upon the slaves when they reached Khartoum? He remembered that when this question was last debated in that House, on the Motion for Adjournment made by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), the Prime Minister was very much astonished that Members on this side of the House should have supported the hon. Baronet in that Motion, and he advanced to the Table in something like a threatening attitude towards hon. Members on this side. He and several other Members bent their heads to the coming storm; but the storm was suddenly diverted, and fell on the devoted head of the hon. Baronet opposite. The Prime Minister did, indeed, tell the hon. Baronet that from him, at least, he should hear no word of reproach; but all he could say was—"Heaven help the hon. Baronet when he met a more candid friend than the Prime Minister!" He was also reminded that there was one point upon which the hon. Baronet and the Prime Minister agreed, and that was the policy, greatly adopted by the Prime Minister, but first enunciated by the hon. Baronet—the policy of "rescue and retire." That policy that House could not trust to the right hon.

Gentleman, because it was not new to the right hon. Gentleman. It would be in the recollection of the Committee that at the General Election of 1880 the Prime Minister came forward in order to rescue the Liberal Party, and then to retire; but he ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman had not rescued the Liberal Party from any of its difficulties—unless it were the difficulty they felt as to the choice of a Leader—but he had plunged the Party into deeper difficulties, and the country with it. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members opposite might say "No, no!" but he would ask them whether the Prime Minister had rescued the Liberal Party or not? [An hon. Member: What from?] From the difficulties in which they were notoriously placed before that General Election. The difficulties were so many that he would not take up the time of the Committee in reciting them. Nor would he argue with hon. Members opposite as to whether by the great but unconvincing speech the Prime Minister made on the proposed Vote of Censure, he rescued his Party; or whether by their many and unconvinced votes they rescued him. But on one point, at any rate, he should not be at issue with hon. Members opposite, and that was that the Prime Minister had not retired. Rescue? Alas! they were too late for rescue in Egypt; and he thought the word "rescue" was one which could never pass the lips of the Prime Minister without something like a pang of remorse. He admired, and he envied, the great powers of the Prime Minister, and the many hours they enabled him to devote the Public Business; but he could not say he envied the right hon. Gentleman the few hours he was able to devote to repose. Were there no dreams which came across those hours? Were there no visions of the eyes of women and children straining, and straining in vain, for the first glint of light upon British bayonets that never arrived? We were trusted at Sinkat; but the hearts which trusted us were now dead and cold, and in their graves lay buried the honour of this country. He ventured to ask, under these circumstances, for a plain, candid, and straightforward declaration of policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and for this reason. He believed no such momentous question as this had been asked before in the lifetime of this generation. It was not only that it affected the lives, the property, and the happiness of the labourious population which he had attempted to describe. Nor was it only that it affected the Suez Canal and our highway to India. But because this question opened up, in all its vastness, the great Eastern Question—a Question which for this country he conceived to be whether they were or were not to maintain their hold on their great Dependency of India? He would remind the Prime Minister, if he might do so, that the chief difficulty they had in the point of contact between the East and the West on this question was the way in which they must deal with the Mahommedan population of India. He would also remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Mahommedans were Fatalists, and, perhaps without knowing it themselves, were worshippers of strength and success. By that test alone they would try the pretensions of the Mahdi, and by that test alone they would try the pretensions of this country. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman also of another thing—that not only were the Mahommedans Fatalists, but they were religious enthusiasts; and he would tell the Government that they would make a very great mistake if they attempted to guage the extent of the devotion of the Mahommedans to the religion of their country by the cold indifference with which the religion of this country was treated by Her Majesty's Government when it was a question of supporting it in this House. With them religion was a passion which was always at red-heat, which anything might set ablaze in a moment; and if once the green flag of the Prophet should be unfurled, this country would see a religious war such as this generation had never heard of. Therefore, it was well worth their while to see that the Mahommedans of India should make no mistake as to what our policy was, and as to where we would circumscribe the boundaries of the Mahdi. There was one wand, and one alone, by which he believed we could rule the East, and the Prime Minister, great conjuror as he was, would do well to see that he attempted to conjure with no other. That wand was the prestige of England, the rooted conviction of millions that when England said a thing she meant it—the conviction, founded on a long series of strong, defensible, and timely actions, that England must succeed. This had been difficult and hard to obtain; but their forefathers had obtained it for them, and it was hard that they should lose it. But, hard though it was to lose that prestige, he would remind Her Majesty's Government that it would be harder than ever to regain it.

> "Nec vera virtus, cùm semel excidit,
> Curat reponi deterioribus."

He would venture to say that Her Majesty's Government had lost that prestige to a very great extent, and by so doing had made our Empire more precarious than it had been; and he thought he was not going beyond bounds when he said they had degraded the proud name of English citizenship, which alone bore any relation to the *civis Romanus sum.* They had degraded it to the cry of the hireling on the Red Sea—"Thank God I am not an Englishman!" This was a serious state of things, which the Government would do well to take into account as an important factor at the present moment. He thought he might call on the Prime Minister at that critical period to declare plainly what was going to be their policy in the East. He did not think that by so doing there would be any danger, either to the military operations which might be in progress, or which might be required, because he believed that by that course the military operations would be rendered, to a great extent, unnecessary; and he ventured to think that he might appeal with some force, and perhaps under peculiar circumstances, to the Prime Minister to make a frank declaration of policy, because at that moment the right hon. Gentleman stood in a peculiar position with regard to this country, and with regard to the whole world. Probably it was no exaggeration to say that as regarded intellectual attainments, added to experience, the Prime Minister stood a head and shoulders above any of his contemporaries in that House. He was reminded that once there was one who could have claimed, or at the least could have debated with the Prime Minister, the palm of pre-eminence. There was one who might probably have been called to Her Majesty's Counsels had he been a live last week, and if he had been so called he would have taken that House and the country into his confidence by making a fair and a frank declaration of policy. The spirit of that man still lived on these Benches, and seemed to haunt the memory of this House; but he slept where the voice of the country could not awaken him. Alone the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister survived of the great Twin Brethren of Parliamentary debate, and he therefore was doubly responsible for coming frankly forward at his country's call. He (Mr. Finch-Hatton) thought there could be no doubt whatever that great interests would be served, and great searchings of heart would be set at rest all over the world, if they could only obtain from Her Majesty's Government the declaration which they demanded. He would frankly own that his own humble individual opinion was that the only policy which this country could pursue with regard to Egypt at the present moment was—first of all, to declare frankly for a Protectorate over that country; and, secondly, to complete the pacification of the Soudan, not for the benefit of the Egyptian Government, not to place it under the English Government, but to secure to it, by the unrivalled experience of General Gordon and the aid of his manifold gifts, an autonomy friendly to this country. That, he thought, would be the best solution of the Soudan difficulty. Further than that, they should tell the Mahdi, in unmistakable terms, that if he attempted in any way to unfurl the banner of a religious war he would be at once and finally crushed by the might of a Power which, when she struck in earnest, never struck in vain. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would see his way to giving them some frank, some manly declaration on this point, and that he would leave the platform of diplomatic enigma, which was unworthy the dignity and the talents of the Prime Minister of England. He summoned the right hon. Gentleman, like Achilles, to come out of his tent when his counsels were demanded by the great Chiefs of the nation; and he warned him that if, in spite of the summons, he refused to speak, he would, like Achilles, bring ten thousand woes upon his country; like him, he would see the honour that might have been his in the solution of this great question transferred tothe brow of another; and like him, too, condemn his followers to a 10 years' siege before the citadel of Power. He thanked the Committee for the extreme indulgence which had been extended to him.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON congratulated the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Finch-Hatton) on the success of his first speech in the House. He was sure they had all heard that speech with great interest; he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had done so especially, because he thought the best part of it was that in which the hon. Member had been preaching from his (Sir Wilfrid Lawson's) text. He was not going to reply to a great deal that the hon. Gentleman had said, because he observed that the hon. Member's remarks were very much like bits of the speeches which had come from other quarters on the Opposition side of the House; and though speeches were excellent by way of criticism, they did not suggest any policy of their own. ["Oh, oh!"] What he meant was that they did not suggest any distinct policy. He desired to say a word or two about the speech of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers Stuart), because although that hon. Gentleman had not spoken long he had brought up the old superstition about the Suez Canal. He had really thought that everyone was agreed that their remaining in Egypt had nothing to do with the protection of the Canal; he was glad that no Member of the Cabinet had brought up anything of that sort. The only person who believed in that superstition about the Canal was, he thought, the Archbishop of York, who had written a prayer on the subject. He observed to-day that their going to Egypt was put on a different footing to the theory that they had gone there for their own purposes, because the Prime Minister had said that they were not merely doing their own work in Egypt, but the work of Europe, and of the world and civilization in general. It, therefore, appeared that they were engaged upon a philanthropic expedition, and that they would hear no more about British interests from the Government. Yesterday the Prime Minister had seemed a little surprised—he did not know that the right hon. Gentleman was to blame—that the House should be perpetually discussing the Egyptian Question. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We have had five nights on the Vote of Censure, and we have had besides seven discussions on the subject."

Well, why not? If the Egyptian policy of the Government was a good, and a great, and beneficent policy, as they were told it was during all last year, and, indeed, until this Soudan business came about, surely it must be satisfactory to the Government to have it discussed in the House. Like fine gold put through the furnace, the more it was discussed the brighter it would shine in the country. On the other hand, if the policy of the Government was one which involved them in discredit and danger, if not in disaster, that was the more reason for discussing it constantly. So far from seven debates and a discussion on the Vote of Censure being sufficient, it was likely that this subject would be discussed twice a-week until the 12th of August. What subject was there which it was so necessary to discuss? They were having great marches and countermarches in the Soudan—they had the country evacuated in one part and invaded in another; they had ships of war at the Red Sea ports; they had Proclamations issued defending the Slave Trade; and they were actually told that a great slave dealer had been appointed to rule over a part of the Soudan. Surely, then, it was right that Parliament should discuss this matter, and should try to find some way out of this chaos of contradiction in which they found themselves. The case would be ludicrous if it were not so lamentable. It was clear that, notwithstanding the seven discussions and the five nights' debate, they had arrived at the right opportunity for discussing the whole Egyptian Question, for there was no saying more commonly used by Parliamentary men than that very old saying ascribed, he believed, to Mr. Disraeli. That statesman had once said—"Expenditure depends on policy." Nothing was truer than that when they had to pay the bill which was necessary in consequence of their policy, that was the right time to discuss the merits of that policy. And here he wished to mention a thing which he had before remarked upon in the House, and it was this—that when the Relief Expedition was proposed, he did not oppose it because he believed it was simply and solely an expedition to relieve the garrisons. The sending of that expedition showed that the Government felt themselves responsible for what had, up to that time, gone on in the Soudan. If they had not been responsible it would not have been necessary to mention the matter at all; and yet there were any number of speeches and despatches on the question, and they never could get over the fact that responsibility was recognized when they sent troops to the relief of Tokar. But when Tokar fell the whole scene was in a moment changed; there was then no one left to rescue; and, in his opinion, the fact of advancing as they did do intensified the danger. Let him read to the Committee what appeared this morning in a *Daily New's* telegram, which, he thought, would bear out what he said. The telegram was as follows:—

> (Through Reuter's Agency.) Suakin, March 5, 6.40 p.m. It is now reported that the English entered Tokar just in time to save the population, as the rebels returning from the battlefield were threatening to slaughter them all in revenge for their defeat. The Arabs and the townspeople had previously been living amicably together."

Did not that prove that by sending troops the Government had caused the very danger they wanted to avert? The people of Tokar had given themselves up to the Arabs, preferring, as no doubt they were right in preferring, a Moslem foe to a Christian friend. No doubt the money, or the bulk of the money, the Committee was asked to vote had been already expended; and the question they were discussing was really whether the policy which had led to all this expenditure was to go on or not? The Vote of Censure of the right hon. Gentleman opposite referred really to the Soudan; but the Committee now had an opportunity of discussing the whole policy of the Government in Egypt; and, as far as he was concerned, he did not wish to blame Her Majesty's Ministers for anything like vacillation and inconsistency. He was inclined to think that they had been too consistent throughout—he only wished they had vacillated a little more; but, so far as he knew, they had carried out the policy which they declared two years ago when they commenced warlike operations against Egypt. What was the Egyptian policy the right hon. Gentleman declared openly and frankly to the House? Why, he had said the whole object of the Government was to defend the rights of the Sultan; to defend the rights of the Khedive; to defend the rights of the bondholders; and to defend the Egyptian people. That was a very clear policy; and he did not think it was quite fair to say it was a legacy from the Tory Party. He did not, so far as he was concerned, think there was any necessity for going to Egypt to defend the rights of the Sultan; to defend the rights of the Khedive; to defend the rights of the bondholders; or to defend the rights of the Egyptian people by our Military Forces. It had been explained that night that the only right the Sultan had in that country was the right of drawing a lot of money from the people for doing no service whatever. Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister used to talk about a "bag-and-baggage policy," it did seem strange to him (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) that the right hon. Gentleman should be a party to sending out British troops for the purpose of maintaining the authority of the Sultan. He never had been able to see why it was wrong in the Tory Party not to protest against the Sultan oppressing the Bulgarians, and not wrong in the Liberal Party to come in and allow him to oppress the Mussulmans. But what were the rights of the Khedive? His rights were the rights of oppressing and misgoverning the people over whom he ruled. The Prime Minister the other night had not approved of his (Sir Wilfrid Lawson's) finding fault with the Khedive and calling him "a miserable man." Well, the Khedive was a miserable man; and in saying that he was not using language too strong, for he had a high precedent for it. The Home Secretary, who was a model of moderation and respectability in his language, had the other day called the Government "a miserable Government." ["No, no!"] [An hon. MEMBER: What Government?] This Government. He begged pardon—he had misled the Committee—he was not speaking of the present, but the late, Home Secretary. The Prime Minister had reproved him (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) for speaking as he did about the Khedive, because, the right hon. Gentleman said, the Khedive had been true to us. Why, of course he had been true to us since the fall of Arabi Pasha—what would have become of him if he had not? The Khedive, no doubt, was true enough now, because if he were not he would very soon find himself at the bottom of the Red Sea. He was told that the party of the Khedive in Egypt, all told, consisted of six footmen of his household. The policy of Her Majesty's Government was that of keeping the Khedive in his power and on his lands, and he did not think that was a policy which they ought to pursue. The other reason why they were to vote this money was, as the Prime Minister had explained, the rights of the bondholders. That was the real thing, no doubt, and right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite knew well enough that was the real thing; because when they started and initiated and supported that policy two years ago, warmly urging it on the Government, where was it done and how? Why, it took place at Willis's Rooms, when the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition rode the British lion round the room until he roared again. Who was in the chair on that occasion? Why, no other than the Chairman to the Bondholders' Committee, and that, to his mind, threw a flood of light on the whole question; that showed that, in reality, the expedition to Egypt was only the sending out of British troops to act as bum-bailiffs. The Government had enabled the bondholders to get the blood of these poor people in security for the payment of their loans —land which was formerly not allowed to be taken as security. The only pleasant thing he saw about the whole Egyptian business was the prospect in the near future of the bondholders being obliged to relinquish some of their plunder. He came now to the question of the rights of the Egyptian people. Why were they to go and slaughter the people of Egypt in order to protect their rights? What were the rights of independent people? Why he should say that the first right of an independent people was the right of self-government—that was the noblest right they could have—a right they were all so proud of in England; and before this debate concluded he should like some one to tell them why the Egyptian people were to be an exception to that rule, which they were so anxious to see applied to all other nations? The Egyptian people wished simply to govern themselves; to vote their own Budget; to manage their own affairs; and that was a simple enough demand. [*A laugh.*] The hon. Alderman (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) laughed; but he did not know anything about it. The Egyptian people wished to vote their own Budget; and that was the origin of our whole quarrel with them; that was why we bombarded Alexandria, and why we had gone to Cairo. But do not let the Committee take his word for it. ["No."] An hon. Gentleman would not take his word for it; but he would give him an authority—he would give them the authority of Mr. Mackenzie Wallace, who had written one of the most interesting books which they could read upon this question. That gentleman, in his work, had alluded to Arabi and the rebellion, and had said that in the national movement there were some undeveloped germs which might have borne fruit. But the British Government had crushed those germs, and to his mind the history of the world hardly showed a more melancholy transaction, particularly as those germs had been crushed by a people who were proud of their freedom. Our action was too bad for France—["Oh, oh!"]—and hon. Gentlemen who cried "Oh, oh!" should remember how the French had sailed majestically out of the Harbour of Alexandria. The French would not bombard the place, and because they refused we upset all the international arrangements which had existed. Other nations had not wished to have anything to do with it, and had looked with a kind of cynical contempt on the whole business. Why did we do this thing? We had heard about how the French had killed Rome; how Austria had pulled down Hungary; and how Russia had oppressed Poland; but these countries were military despotisms, whereas we were a nation of reformers—we were constantly introducing Reform Bills. He dared say hon. Members, when they were boys, delighted in reading the lines of Campbell with reference to Poland—

> "Found not a generous friend nor pitying foe,
> Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe . . .
> Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
> And Freedom shriek'd as Koseinsko fell."

Freedom, he thought, must have uttered some sort of cry when that performance took place, and the hope of establishing free institutions in Europe, Africa, and Asia, must very much have sunk when a free nation like our own indulged in such dark deeds of despotism. When they were discussing that Vote of money let them discuss the policy which, in his humble opinion, they ought to pursue. To his mind there were only three courses open to them. First of all, they might go on, if they liked, with this dismal farce, which had brought them into their present position—the farce of the Dual Control. He maintained that it was a farce, because it was fighting against the laws of nature. They could not divest power from responsibility if they tried to do so; and the Government themselves admitted that he was right in this description of the matter, because, as he gathered from their speeches that night, they only wished to persevere in that policy for a little while longer. Then there was another course. They might take the bold course, which, no doubt, many hon. Members in the House would be prepared to take—namely, the course of annexing the country; but in that case, as the Prime Minister had declared that night, they would be utterly untrue to Europe, and to the pledges they had made in the House of Commons. He need not say that that was a course that would not be generally approved of; and it would not be a wise course either. This system of governing countries against the will of the people themselves had never answered, so far as he was aware. They had an illustration of that near home. Let them look at Ireland, which was only a few miles from them. There they had to govern by means of an Army against the will of the people, and what was the consequence? Why, the consequence was that hon. Members were worn out with sitting up until 6 o'clock in the morning sometimes, and the House of Commons itself ran the risk of being brought into ill-repute. [An hon. MEMBER: We have India.] Well, as for India, they had not done with her yet. She had given them a great deal of trouble; and it was very possible that one of these days they would have other difficulties to face in that country; but, at any rate, he did not wish to deal with the question of India at present. Then there was a third course—they could leave Egypt to the Egyptians, and let them manage their own affairs. The first step towards that would be to release Arabi, and allow him to return to the country from which he had been ruthlessly expelled. He did not blame the Government for what they had done in regard to Arabi, because he believed that in this matter, as in many other matters, they had acted on false information given them by their agents abroad. ["No, no!"] The noble Lord opposite said "No, no!" but he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had a better opinion of the Government than had that noble Lord. What he would say was that, for some reason or other, Arabi was libelled and persecuted. With regard to Arabi's character, some words written by Mr. Mackenzie Wallace were worth quoting — and the Committee would bear in mind that this gentleman was not a follower of his, because he talked about "fussy people at home," meaning those of them who sat below the Gangway on the Ministerial side. Speaking of Arabi, Mr. Mackenzie Wallace said he was a dutiful son, a good husband, and a kind father, and, on the whole, a respectable man; and he summed up Arabi's character in these words—

> "Never since the days of Mehemet Ali, or perhaps from a much earlier date, was there a man who had such a firm hold on the country as Arabi, for he had not only the Army but Police at his disposal, and consequently was in a position to terrorize to any extent he chose."

["Hear, hear!"] He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) thought some one would say "Hear, hear!" to that—that was what the Prime Minister called a trap. Well, Arabi was not only in a position to terrorize to any extent he liked—

> "But he also enjoyed, as I have shown, the sympathies of nearly every section of the Native population. Arabi did not acquire or preserve his influence by terrorism, for at the commencement he had no power to injure anyone; and during the whole time of his power he never caused a single individual to be beheaded, hanged, or shot. If he had gone to the poll with Tewfik, and all corrupt practices had been excluded, he would have obtained the votes of an overwhelming majority of the free and independent electors. If we did not mean to create really good government, why did we destroy the National Party which had a far better chance of preserving order of some kind than the Khedive?"

Well, he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had said what he thought with a view of clearing up Arabi's character. What had come over this country? It was all very well to attack the Government; but the Government only acted according to the will of the people. ["No, no!"] That, at any rate, was his opinion; and he wondered what would come over the people of this country if they could sanction the kind of policy he had described. Many hon. Gentlemen present could remember Garibaldi's entry into London; the most wonderful ovation that the country had, perhaps, ever seen. They would remember how the Metropolis rejoiced at the sight of sô great a supporter of freedom; and he could remember the reception given to General Haynau by men with whom he had, as a rule, but little sympathy—namely, the brewers' men. General Haynau met with this reception at the hands of a people who wished to show their love of freedom, and hatred of oppression; and yet the same people who had received Garibaldi with rejoicings, and Haynau with displeasure, now sanctioned the banishment of Arabi to Ceylon. He regretted very much that they should have acted in that way, and he did not suppose that the mischief done could be repaired in an hour. Those who had begun this course of policy, no doubt, thought it was best to stick to it; but he had a firm and implicit conviction that the day would come when true Liberal principles would again influence the people of this country; when Egypt would be handed back to her rightful owners; when the principles of freedom would reign there, and a better and happier day dawn upon a people who had so long been grievously oppressed.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had contributed a most humorous speech to the discussion of that evening; but he regretted that he should have echoed the outcry about the bondholders, because he (Lord Eustace Cecil) never could understand why the bondholders should be expected to pay for that which properly the Government ought to pay for, nor could he understand why the salaries of certain Members of the Government should be applied to pay for the disturbances put down in Egypt. But, passing from that subject, he would point out that they had had two most notable speeches that evening from the Treasury Bench; and he was bound to say that those speeches were more remarkable for what they did not say than for what they did say. The Prime Minister had made a great many observations and statements in the course of his speech; but as to anything in the nature of a statement of policy, it was conspicuous for its absence. Hon. Members on those Benches did expect that the right hon. Gentleman would have told the Committee why they were in the Soudan, and how long they were going to remain there, and that he would have given a sketch of the Government policy, showing what the future relations between Egypt and this country were likely to be. But not one word of that could he discover in the eloquent speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He had listened to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, who had opened this discussion; and he must join his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) in regretting that the noble Marquess had not seen his way to say something in praise of that gallant Army which had done so much for the country, and he would add for Her Majesty's Government, in the Soudan. Whether it was, as he believed it to be, an omission, or whether the Secretary of State for War was so taken up with the business of his statement and the justice of his case, he knew not; but he trusted that, if the noble Marquess had another opportunity of speaking in this discussion, he would not neglect to say that which ought to be said by the one Minister who presided at the War Office in respect of their gallant Army. But there was one thing which the noble Marquess did say which he (Lord Eustace Cecil) had paid particular attention to—namely, that the Army of Osman Digna was to be dispersed. Now, that was a very important admission for the noble Marquess to make, and for this reason, as he should presently show. As far as it was known, the encampment of Osman Digna was at a distance of about 10 or 12 miles from Suakin; they were told, however, that another portion of his forces, consisting of some 2,000 or 3,000 men, was encamped at a distance of about eight or 10 miles further away. That was the information of that evening, at any rate; and they might, therefore, presume that there was still a very considerable body of Arabs in arms. Supposing that General Graham, acting on his instructions, went out to disperse this force, and Osman Digna, showing more generalship than he had shown hitherto, retired into the Desert, he would then ask whether their troops, headed by General Graham, were to follow Osman Digna into the Desert, to whatever distance he chose to take them; because, if that were to be the case, all he would say was that they had nothing in the shape of warlike resources for the purpose. Their transport, as the noble Marquess knew, was utterly deficient; and the inevitable consequence would be that their men would be completely exhausted in a short time, and probably overwhelmed, and the Prime Minister, besides having to answer, as he was afraid he would have to answer, for the lives of so many men, women, and children at Sinkat, Tokar, and El Teb, would have to answer for the loss of a British Army. Now, he desired to dwell for a moment on one part of the question which seemed to have escaped the attention of the Committee. They had heard a great deal about the general policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, a subject undoubtedly well worth entering into; but the Committee had heard almost absolutely nothing beyond what his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) had said on the subject of the military policy. He conceived that the military policy of Her Majesty's Government was especially cognate to the subject they were dealing with, and the Estimates then under consideration. In his opinion, the same language applied to the military policy as applied to the general policy of the Government; and he might say, bearing in mind the motto "Rescue and retire," which had been used so often, that "Too late" applied to the military policy of Her Majesty's Government. To go back two years, to the time when Sir Beauchamp Seymour bombarded Alexandria, they all recollected, and all knew, that, when the moment arrived for landing a portion of the forces, so as to prevent further depredation or the spreading of the flames of Alexandria, that force was not to be found. The Admiral had only a very small number of Marines and troops with him; and it was owing to the want of that force—at least, many hon. Gentlemen thought so at the time—that the rebellion of Arabi was not put down. Again, if he might refer to that most gallant deed of a most gallant Army and General at Tel-el-Kebir, he thought that Her Majesty's Government had much more reason to be proud of their good fortune than their good merits. That Army, as he had said, performed a very gallant deed under discouraging circumstances; but supposing that Arabi, as he had supposed just now of Osman Digna, had known something of the strategy of the olden time, and had led Sir Garnet Wolseley and his force into the heart of the Desert, where would the Prime Minister and his policy have been at that moment? He had not the least doubt that, under those circumstances, the Army must have been lost; because it was not provided with proper transport, proper cavalry, proper medical arrangements, or, in fact, with the equipment necessary to the force. That deficiency was, undoubtedly, due to a want of foresight, and he believed the military policy of Her Majesty's Government at the time was but a happy-go-lucky policy. He did not believe that when Sir Garnet Wolseley went out to Egypt Her Majesty's Government had any clear idea of what would be the result of the operations, or of what would happen in the event of defeat. Well, that led him to the consideration of what the future was to be. He had shown—and he believed that any hon. Member who looked back to those times would see—that entire ignorance prevailed as to what was going to be done. Lord Wolseley had stated that the establishment necessary for keeping order in Egypt would be about 10,000 or 12,000 men. What did the Government do? Within a year or 18 months of that time that Army was reduced—he admitted on the advice of the responsible Agents of the Government who were in Egypt—to 7,000 men. The Government did not seem at that time to have been fully warned, nor did they seem to know what was going on in the Soudan, whether or not through the fault of their Agents at Cairo he was unable to say. He thought they were bound to expect from the Government that, at all events, they should not be in a hurry. Her Majesty's Government knew perfectly well that the state of things in Egypt was, to say the least of it, critical. They knew it was impossible to rely on the Egyptian Army, or on the Egyptian Police, and he held it was their duty to the country and the taxpayers to do what had to be done in Egypt themselves. Because, supposing that anything like the policy which the Prime Minister stated at the Mansion House had been carried out, and the Army had been withdrawn, it was perfectly evident to anyone who considered the subject that they would have been obliged to do the whole work over again. What actually did take place showed an amount of hurry and precipitation on the part of Her Majesty's Government, which, in his opinion, was totally unjustifiable. Well, then they had to consider what was to be the establishment of their troops in Egypt in the future, and that was a question which he thought required a great deal of consideration. He had been greatly in hope that the noble Marquess would have given the Committee somewhat more than the very meagre information which he had supplied as to the views of Her Majesty's Government on the establishment in Egypt that would be necessary in the future. All that the noble Marquess had told them was that the policy of Her Majesty's Government, from a military point of view, was a defensive policy, and that he supposed that Suakin would have to be occupied by a permanent garrison; but what sort of permanent garrison it was to be he had not stated. Possibly the question of Allies had something to do with this; but, however that might be, the question was one on which Her Majesty's Government should make up their minds in justice to the troops who were at Suakin. Let the Committee consider what the country was like, and where it was situated; it was in the 19th degree of latitude, or, in other words, well within the tropics; it was, undoubtedly, a most unwholesome and unhealthy place; and he believed the Adjutant General had spoken of its unhealthiness both publicly and privately. Their troops, again, were young soldiers, and often very young men. It was only the other day that he had asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War a Question respecting two regiments which had been sent to the Mediterranean; but to that Question he had received no answer. These regiments, let it be remembered, were not going to the seat of war, becau se in that case he should not have addressed any Question to the noble Marquess upon the subject; they were simply going to a Mediterranean garrison; and therefore he saw no harm in asking whether it was not the case that more than two-thirds of the men who composed them were of under two years' service. The noble Marquess absolutely declined to give any answer to that Question. The inference was, of course, that the service of the men had been correctly stated; and he had already reason to know, on the best authority, that it was so. But they had information to the effect that the troops in Egypt —some of them certainly—were not of long service, and that was an important consideration if they were to remain there indefinitely. He made use of that term because the Government seemed to have no definite policy of any sort. There was very great risk of the troops being exposed to an unwholesome climate, and it was possible that some form of illness might break out at Suakin which would seriously compromise the health of the garrison. His right hon. and gallant Friend had asked, very naturally, with what troops the forts were to be garrisoned—were they to be Indian troops, or White troops, or were mercenaries to be made use of? Now, he had repeatedly advocated, considering how much of the British Army was employed within the tropics, the enlistment of more or less Black troops. He believed that a mixture of Black troops and White troops would be the best for a permanent garrison. But, however that might be, it was a very important point; and he thought the noble Marquess was bound to lay before the Committee some sort of scheme, because their occupation could not be for so short a period as six months, as he had once told them it would be. They knew very well that the occupation of Egypt, whether it ended in a Protectorate or anything else, must be of considerable duration; and if he were to say six years, and probably longer, instead of six months, he believed he should not be far from the mark. Therefore, he said that the noble Marquess was bound to consider this question, and to furnish some idea of what arrangements he had made for the health of the troops, as well as the protection of the country. Now, taking the question of the fortified posts, there was the littoral of the Red Sea, there was Suakin, Massowah, and other similar places. Were those positions on the Red Sea to be defended entirely by the Navy, or was there to be anything there in the shape of fortifications? Then, with regard to Assouan; a great deal had been said about that lately, and they had been told that two Egyptian regiments, commanded by English officers, were to go there; and they had also heard that an English regiment was also under orders to proceed, it was not known exactly where, but to some place in Upper Egypt. Now, it was for Her Majesty's Government to decide what was to be the boundary line to be defended in Upper Egypt, if they were going to pursue the policy of giving up the whole of the Soudan; but at that moment the Committee was completely in the dark upon that matter. It was believed that something in the nature of fortification was to be erected; and, if so, it must be done more or less in a permanent way at the right places. But the point to be considered was, when all these things were done, who was to bear the expense? That was a question which would have to be decided between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt. But it was not only the question of fortifications, but that of the health of British troops, that had to be considered; there must be a certain number of hospitals established at different points, and for all these things money must be found somewhere or other. Now, were they to have these things provided for at 12 o'clock at night by a Supplementary Estimate, brought in as this had been? All he would say of this Estimate was that to him it was only another proof of want of foresight on the part of Her Majesty's Government. He had looked over the Estimate, and he found that there was, first of all, £100,000 charged for the expenses of the expedition to Suakin, of which no details whatever were given. They were asked to vote a lump sum for the expedition without the smallest detail being supplied, while the £270,900 for ordinary and extraordinary expenses should, from his point of view, have been brought into the Army Estimates of last year. Her Majesty's Government must have known that they were likely to remain in Egypt for a longer time than six months, which period the noble Marquess himself knew had been extended; and there was, therefore, no excuse for not providing for another six months. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) said that the present Estimate should only have been taken for the expenses of the expedition to Suakin, because what was the result of the present arrangement? It was that if anyone wanted to go carefully into the Estimate it would be almost impossible for him to do so, because the expenses of Egypt and the expenses of Suakin were mixed up together, and nobody could tell what belonged to one and what belonged to the other. Again, there were certain little items in the Estimate about which he desired to ask some questions. There had been a great deal of talk lately about the deficiency of field guns in the recent operations; and they had been told that, on military advice, Her Majesty's Government did not think proper to send out field guns. He had no reason to quarrel with that advice; but he found here a charge of no less than £22,000 put down for metal. Now, as he had had the honour of being in the War Department, it occurred to him that the sum of £22,000 was a considerable sum of money to spend on guns; and therefore he asked, seeing that no field guns were sent with the force, why was this money spent? Was it spent at Suakin, or was it spent in Egypt? Upon that point there was nothing whatever to inform the Committee. It was now so much the custom to lump these matters together that the House of Commons had no control whatever over the expenditure. He knew that the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) was a great financial reformer, and he directed the attention of the hon. Gentleman to this matter, because it was well known that he was anxious to have both efficiency and economy in the Public Service. He was quite sure the hon. Gentleman would agree with him that it was impossible for the Committee to go into the Estimate as thoroughly as it ought to be, and, at the same time, to vote a lump sum of this kind. Then, again, he saw that a very large sum was put down for saltpetre and sulphur, and also a large sum for gunpowder and gun-cotton. All these things came in his Department when he was at the War Office in former days, and he recollected that gun-cotton was made use of for torpedoes; but why did this expedition to Suakin require all this supply of materials? His belief was that the Government found that their stores wanted replenishing, and that they availed themselves of the opportunity offered by this Estimate to put this item into the list. He thought this extremely likely, although, of course, he was not in a position to prove it; and, therefore, he felt that such criticism as the Estimates used to receive from the hon. Member for Burnley and other Gentlemen was most necessary in the present instance. But at that hour it was quite impossible to give the matter the attention which it demanded; and, therefore, it was perfectly clear that the Estimate would have to be discussed again. There was something to be discussed besides the general policy of the Government; and if these matters were to be thoroughly considered they could not get at the root of the business unless they had the information afforded which it was in the power of Her Majesty's Government to give. And that was exactly the point he wished to arrive at. In small things and in great they could get no information from the Government. The Prime Minister had, as usual, made them an exceedingly eloquent speech; but it was, at the same time, entirely deficient in information. The right hon. Gentleman had been reminded of what took place four years ago, and he would be reminded of it over and over again. There were the speeches delivered in Mid Lothian, and there was the authorized version of them published, from which hon. Members might refresh their memories. He recollected perfectly well that the right hon. Gentleman denounced Lord Beaconsfield's Government on the ground of its adventurous policy, not only with regard to India and Africa, but in all parts of the world. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, at that moment, what he thought of his own policy? Was it adventurous, or was it not? Lord Beaconsfield, at all events, accomplished peace with honour; but that could not be said of the right hon. Gentleman, for he had accomplished peace with dishonour. Looking at Egypt, it was perfectly true that they had had successes there—military successes; but had there been financial or administrative successes? He said that the more they looked into this question the more plainly they would see how far the deeds of the right hon. Gentleman were from his words. The right hon. Gentleman, after only four years of administration, must have found how difficult a matter it was to make his deeds tally with his words; and he (Lord Eustace Cecil) could not but think that when he denounced the late Government, in the House and out of it, the idea never entered his mind that in three or four years he would find himself in a more difficult position than that of the Government which he wanted to displace. He could not say he was sorry for the experiences of the right hon. Gentleman, because it would give him, at all events, a fuller appreciation of the difficulties which the late Government had to encounter, and because the more he had to do with this unfortunate mess, as he must call it, in Egypt, the more he would regret that he had not adopted a consistent, firm, and courageous policy, not only in military affairs, but in matters relating to the civil administration of that country.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he did not rise to go into the historical aspect of the matters which had been touched upon that evening, and he did not propose to enter into any recapitulation of what might be called the ancient history of this subject, with a single exception. He had been very much struck with the statement of the Prime Minister that one unmitigated benefit, one real innovation of the highest value, had resulted from the interposition of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, and that this great benefit which had been conferred upon the people of Egypt was the cessation of the odious anomaly, as the Premier described it, of the exemption of foreigners from taxation. Now, the Premier had laid great stress upon the fact that foreigners had commenced to be subject to the Common Law, and that, whereas previous to the interposition of Her Majesty's Government foreigners were exempt from taxation, that would not be the case in future. That was all very fine, and he had no doubt whatever that the Prime Minister, when he made the statement, was altogether oblivious of another Ministerial statement made two years ago by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in reply to a Question on that very subject. Of course, matters were changed. At present it was the interest of the Government to demonstrate the great benefit resulting from British intervention in Egypt; and, at the time he referred to, he thought it was their business to deny that Arabi's insurrection had any reasonable ground underlying it. He (Mr. O'Donnell) was one of those who believed that there were very reasonable grounds for that insurrection, and, amongst others, that the scandalous exemption of foreigners from taxation justified a considerable amount of discontent on the part of the Egyptian people. It was for that reason that he asked, on the 22nd of June, 1882—

> "Whether it is true that the European population of Egypt have been practically exempt from the payment of taxes; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have recommended the cessation of this exemption?"

In reply to this, he was informed that foreigners were not exempt, and that the Egyptian Government had full powers to compel recalcitrant foreigners to pay their taxes, the inference being that on that ground Arabi's insurrection had no justification. The exact words of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs were—

> "As regards taxation, the foreigner in Egypt stands, legally, in the same position as the Native inhabitant, except that the Capitulations exempt him from the capitation tax or tribute. This tax is, however, no longer levied in Egypt. . . . . . And that the Egyptian Government have occasionally had recourse to vigorous measures to recover the amounts due."—(3 *Hansard*, [271] 27.)

What could be the reason for this extraordinary contradiction between the two statements from the Treasury Bench? To-day they were told that the establishment of equality between Natives and foreigners in Egypt only commenced with the rule of Her Majesty's Government in that country; less than two years ago they were told that the position of equality between foreigners and Natives in respect of taxation had been already established. He asked whether the former statement was made in order to take away all justification from the discontented Egyptians? He was ready to admit that the Under Secretary of State had not a shadow of foundation for the statement he made two years ago; but was it not remarkable that that statement should be made from the Treasury Bench without any contradiction—a statement wholly destitute of foundation? He had no doubt that the exigencies of policy required that statement to be made; but they were now told of the enormous good derived from equality before the law which had descended upon Egypt from the supremacy of Her Majesty's Government. As a specimen of what might be described very mildly as the inaccuracy of the present Cabinet in the face of difficulties, he certainly thought that this deserved a place in the records of the time. Attempts had been made to draw from the Prime Minister some definite declaration as to the time during which the British troops would remain in Egypt; and the only reply, so far as he could gather, vouchsafed by the Prime Minister was that the British troops would remain in Egypt until a stable self-supporting Native Government had been established in Egypt under the fostering care of Her Majesty's Ministers. He could not but regard that statement and that promise as just about equivalent in another sense to the description given of the state of Egypt two years ago by the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. How was the policy of the Government preparing Egypt for Native self - government? Were they preparing Egypt for Native self-government by dismissing an increasing number of Native officials from posts where they could alone learn the most elementary part of self-government? Were they preparing Egypt for Native self-government, and to resume her place among nations, by increasing the number of foreign officials in all the important posts? Where were the Natives whom they wished to co-operate with them in the government of Egypt? Even Cherif Pasha was too much an Egyptian to co-operate in the sanguinary sham which the Government had set up in Egypt. Who was there in Egypt to co-operate with the Government? Nubar Pasha, that Armenian adventurer who went there a quarter of a century ago penniless, and who was to-day rolling in the possession of hundreds and thousands of pounds, the result of the system of greasing the palm which he had enjoyed? Year after year he had been the tool of the vulture-beaked blood-suckers of Egypt. That was the sort of man to co-operate with the Government in Egypt. There was another form of co-operation which Her

Majesty's Government had introduced into Egypt—Native co-operation by thousands and thousands of peasants, who knew not one end of a gun from the other, were, in order to carry out Her Majesty's Government's policy of slaughter, sent to fight fanatic warriors, and were slaughtered like sheep in the shambles. That was the kind of co-operation permitted under Her Majesty's Government to the Natives of Egypt. Any observations he made on the Government were not addressed merely to this particular Government; he was not such a coward as that; for at the bottom, and in reality, there was not an act of bloody treachery carried out by the Government in Egypt or elsewhere which had not the sanction of the majority of that House. If the blood that had been shed from human veins during the few years he had had a seat in that House could take concrete form and appear in that House it would rise above the highest Benches in the House, and there would be an end to some of the long-winded orations, and the breath of hon. Members would be choked in the blood they had caused to flow. If he criticized Her Majesty's Government, he only criticized them as the head and front of the offenders in that House. There was no intention on either side to withdraw from Egypt. This country had entered Egypt under false pretences. Alexandria was bombarded under false pretences. The people in the Soudan had been massacred under false pretences. He saw on the placards of that evening's newspapers announcements of fighting near Khartoum, and defeat of the rebels. Even General Gordon was setting to the work of throat-cutting in the Soudan. The Government would stop there until a superior Power drove them out; but some day Providence, which never failed to punish a guilty nation, though they were as proud as Spain in her proudest day, would demand from this House and from this nation an account of the blood which this House and this nation had shed, through their plundering cupidity and greed, for supremacy and power.

Mr. WARTON said, the total sum asked for by the Government was £370,900, and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) proposed to reduce that amount by £206,150; but the hon. Member made out his calculations in a very peculiar way. He said he would only allow two items to remain—namely, the charge for clergymen and nurses; but he could not see why the hon. Member had selected the particular sum he had named for reduction, seeing that the clergy only cost £1,500, and the nurses £2,900. But the hon. Member was above arithmetic, just as the Roman Emperor was above grammar. That, however, was a very small matter. A much more important matter was the extraordinary tactics adopted by the Government. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have felt that the Government were pursuing a rather unusual course. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) gave Notice of his Question for to-morrow, he referred to the great number of instances in which, during the last three years, it had been the practice of the House to consider questions of this kind on a Vote of Credit. For reasons well known to himself, the Prime Minister had chosen to call this a Supplementary Estimate. The Prime Minister was a great master of phrases. Sometimes they meant anything, and sometimes they meant nothing; but in this case the phrase meant a good deal. It meant an attempt to get the judgment of the Committee without giving the House in full an opportunity of discussing the policy of the Government in Egypt; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose conscience he supposed smote him, had got together one or two cases in which the late Government had brought forward Votes for war or for military operations—or, rather, for preventing war—in the form of Supplementary Estimates. At the very most, that answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was an undignified *tu quoque;* but the answer of the Leader of the Opposition was a very pertinent one. These cases were before the Rule of November, 1882. When the Prime Minister brought forward, in the Autumn Session of 1882, those wonderful Resolutions about Procedure, he tried to take advantage of the weariness of the House, and they only now found how tightly the fetters they then too hastily agreed to were to be bound round them. It looked innocent enough to pass those Resolutions. When the Army Estimates had been entered on, and when the Navy and the Civil Service Estimates had been entered on, it looked innocent enough to say that on two days a-week the poor Government might be allowed to go into Committee without a discussion as to whether the Speaker should leave the Chair or not; but the Government had not the courage to say what use they were going to make of these Resolutions. They did not say they intended to print Votes of Credit under the guise of Supplemetary Estimates. They had kept the terms of the understanding to the ear, but broken them to the heart, as they always did; and the Committee were now engaged in this very important discussion, of which it was impossible to overrate the importance, and full justice was not done to hon. Members by having an opportunity of discussing the question as a whole on the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair, and of deciding whether they should or should not censure the policy of the Government in Egypt. The Prime Minister always slipped and slid out of a fair discussion. He evaded the discussion on the Suez Canal, and he slipped out of the difficulty into which he had got just in time to save the Estimates of a tottering Government, knowing that under the gagging Rules of November and December, 1882, the Government had a reserve upon which they could not be challenged—they had misapplied those Rules under most extraordinary circumstances. That was an extremely unfair use of those Rules. When the Prime Minister, dealing with an obsequious supporter, hinted that he had a great deal more to go through, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman in a way that would pin him down to his words——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member is proceeding altogether beyond the limits of this Motion.

Mr. WARTON said, he was sorry to have exceeded limits, and he would proceed without saying anything that was disagreeable to the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member is not obliged to leave out anything because it is disagreeable to me, but to confine himself to the Question.

Mr. WARTON said, that what he meant was that he wished to speak agreeably to the Chairman's ruling. That was all he was endeavouring to do. He was as respectful to that House as he could be, because he knew that time was of importance. The reason why hon. Members on that side were anxious to have an opportunity of fully challenging the policy of the Government was that that policy had not yet been put clearly before them; and he apprehended that the charge against the Government was that their policy had been marked by an utter absence of that power of seeing even the immediate future, which every statesman ought to possess; that they had always been blundering and wrong in every step they took, and had never been able to see the facts of things as they were. While they had been talking about blood-guiltiness, and making observations about justice, they reminded him of the old saying that "They are hypocrites who cannot discern the signs of the times." That was as true now as ever it was; and it was a curious Nemesis that waited on Ministers who did not fully state their policy. The misfortune was that the Government deluded themselves, and they would some day wake up to find that Egypt was not to be governed by fine phrases. Their policy had been most contradictory. Did they mean to put down slavery? Whether they did or did not intend to do so was not of much matter; because, while one day their Agent issued a Proclamation on behalf of slavery, the next day the Prime Minister said they must protect Suakin, because if they did not do so they would be protecting slavery, forgetting that if they protected Tokar, Suakin, and other places, they could not put down slavery. In the long years while this Egyptian policy had been going on he had never troubled the Government about Egyptian affairs. He had been anxious to give them credit, as long as he possibly could, for honest intentions, for he held strongly the doctrine that, to a certain extent, the Queen's Ministers ought to be trusted; and it was not till he had been driven to the conclusion that the present Government could not be trusted that he had felt the necessity of saying he must oppose this proposal. As to the amount of the Vote, what certainty was there that it would not be doubled, tripled, quadrupled? How could anyone tell what the amount would be before they got to the end of the matter? After their troops had retired from Egypt, and left it under a perfectly sound Government, it might be all very well to talk of Supplementary Estimates; but, entering, as they now were, on a mission of which they could not see the end, the Government ought at once to bring forward their proposal in the form of a Vote of Credit. It was the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), who was now sitting so cosily upon the Treasury Bench, who used that unhappy phrase about evacuating Egypt in six months. It was that announcement which did so much harm; and he (Mr. Warton) supposed that was the reason why the Government would not say anything on the subject, or give the Committee any information as to their intentions. He thanked the Committee for their kindness in listening so patiently to him; and he hoped that when he spoke on future occasions he would not incur the Chairman's displeasure.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON moved that the Chairman do now report Progress. He assumed the Government would not resist the Motion. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen who interrupted him were probably not aware that the Prime Minister himself admitted that the debate was introduced by a speech of such importance that two or three nights might possibly be occupied in the discussion of the Vote. There were many hon. Members who wished to address the Committee; therefore, he moved that Progress be now reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he was afraid it would not be of much use if the Government did object to report Progress; but he must protest, on behalf of the Government, against the assumption that the Government had no objection to reporting Progress. He understood that a considerable number of hon. Gentlemen still wished to address the Committee; but when he considered what had been the state of the Committee during the last few hours, and the notorious difficulty that had been experienced in keeping the debate alive, he thought it was to be regretted that some of the hon. Gentlemen who, it was now understood, were so anxious to address the Committee did not make that anxiety more evident at an earlier period of the debate, when it was perfectly easy for them to obtain an opportunity to speak. The Government did not propose to oppose the Motion; but they intended to put the Vote down for to-morrow, in the hope that it would then be disposed of.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he only rose in consequence of the last words of the noble Marquess. Of course, hon. Members understood that Supply would stand for to-morrow—it always did stand for Friday—and that it would be open to the Government to put down what Supply they liked. It would be open to the Government to put down this particular Vote; but, looking to the state of the Paper, and seeing how late Supply would be reached, if reached at all, it would, no doubt, be convenient to the Committee that it should be understood that the Vote should not be taken to-morrow.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MARRIAGES LEGALIZATION (STOPSLEY, BEDS.) BILL.—[*Lords.*]—[BILL 125.]

(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HIBBERT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was only right he should explain the object of the Bill. The Bill was intended to remove doubts respecting marriages which had taken place in the District Church of Stopsley, in the parish of Luton, in the county of Bedford. The New Parishes Act, 1843, required that when any church had been set up, it should, after being consecrated, be approved by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whereupon the district in which the church was situated should be deemed to be a new parish for ecclesiastical purposes, and it should be lawful to solemnize marriages in such church. In this case the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, for some reason or other, did not signify their approval when the Stopsley Church was consecrated in 1862. Marriages had taken place for the last 21 years in the church. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners had now given their approval; and this Bill was introduced in the House of Lords by the Bishop of Ely for the purpose of removing any doubts that might exist as to the legality of the marriages solemnized in the church. After this explanation he hoped the House would agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

FRESHWATER FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 57.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 28th February.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Fishery board may make bye-laws for determining mesh of nets).

MR. BIRKBECK said, that in moving the first Amendment which stood in his name, it might be convenient that he should explain to the Committee that his object in moving the Amendments of which he had given Notice was to increase the powers of this very useful Bill. He felt that if the Committee sanctioned the increase of powers which he proposed they would give to the Boards of Conservators, if appointed, the very powers which were required in a great many districts of England. The Act of 1878, which was introduced by the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), had been a great success; but time had proved that Boards of Conservators ought to have more powers than the Act of 1878 gave them. The proposals he had to make to the Committee proceeded very much upon the lines of the Norfolk and Suffolk Act of 1877, which had been successful in its operation; the chief object of his Amendments was to provide for the appointment, in certain districts, of Boards of Conservators. He wished the Committee to clearly understand that if the very extensive powers which he suggested were given there would always be the safeguard against any abuse of those powers that no Board of Conservators could be appointed unless the Quarter Sessions sanctioned the appointment, and that any bye-laws that might be drawn up would have, in the first instance, to be publicly advertised for one month, and then to be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Home Department for his confirmation. He begged to move the first Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the word "bye-laws," to insert the words "for all or any of the following purposes, that is to say."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. HIBBERT quite agreed with the Amendments proposed by the hon. Gentleman. They were all framed in accordance with the object of the Bill, and there was no doubt they would greatly improve the Bill.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 10, after the word "catching," to insert the word "freshwater."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the words "in freshwaters."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. HORACE DAVEY proposed, in page 1, line 12, to leave out the word "one," and insert the words "half an." The object of the Amendment was to make the minimum mesh half an inch instead of one inch, as proposed in the Bill. He should be glad if his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert), who had charge of the Bill on behalf of the Government, would inform the Committee whether the minimum mesh was fixed in accordance with the Report of the Inspectors of Fisheries; if not, in accordance with what information was the size of the mesh fixed? He was bound to say that when he put down his Amendment he was under the impression that the minimum mesh of one inch would hardly be small enough in the case of nets for catching bait; but he had since obtained the information from the Board of Conservators who had charge of the rivers in the borough (Christchurch) for which he sat that a minimum mesh of one inch was not too large for bait catching. He thought, however, that if a mesh of no smaller size than one inch was allowed eel fishing would be almost ruined, because there was scarcely any eel who would not find his way through a one-inch mesh. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) intended to accept the Amendment which stood upon the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. Hastings). That Amendment would possibly meet his (Mr. Horace Davey's) objection; therefore he should be pleased if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) would say at once whether he was prepared to accept it. In the meantime, he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, to leave out the word "one," and insert the words "half an."—(*Mr. Horace Davey.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'one' stand part of the Clause."

MR. HIBBERT said, he was sorry he could not accept the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend. The Bill had been drawn upon the scale of a one-inch minimum mesh; therefore it would be unfair if they were to reduce the mesh now. It was his intention to accept the Amendment respecting eels standing in the name of the hon. Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. Hastings); therefore he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would not press the present Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, after the second word "knot," to insert "measured when wet." — (*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, after the word "inches," to insert the words "from knot to knot."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. BIRKBECK proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out the word "two," and insert the word "three." The object of this Amendment was to increase the maximum size of the mesh from two to three inches. He would not press the Amendment if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) saw any objection to it; but he urged the Government to seriously consider whether the power he suggested ought not to be given. For seven years the three-inch mesh had been adopted in Norfolk with the greatest success.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out the word "two," and insert the word "three."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Clause."

MR. WARTON, while expressing no opinion in favour of, or adverse to, the present Amendment, pointed out that any regulation as to the size of the mesh, however well considered, might be evaded by men fishing with two nets so close together that, in reality, the size of the mesh would be much smaller than three inches. He did not know whether there was anything in the Bill to guard against a resort to such a proceeding.

MR. HIBBERT said, he thought an Amendment to be proposed subsequently by the hon. Member (Mr. Birkbeck) would meet such a case as the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) contemplated.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he hoped the Government would not accept the Amendment. He had been in communication with the people who got their living by fishing, and with the Chairman of the Stour and Avon Conservancy Board; and they had informed him that for the purpose of catching bait a net of two-inch mesh would be very proper; but a net with a three-inch mesh would be too large.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Word *substituted.*

MR. BIRKBECK proposed, in page 1, line 14, after the word "wet," to insert—

"(2.) For determining the length and size and description of nets for catching freshwater fish, which may be lawfully used within the district of such board, and the manner of using the same; and

"(3.) For prohibiting the use of any mode and instrument of fishing for freshwater fish within the district of such board, where such mode or instrument appears to be prejudicial to the fisheries."

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. HASTINGS proposed, in page 1, line 14, after the last Amendment, at end of sub-section (1), to insert—

"Provided, That no bye-law made under the authority of this section shall apply to any fixed nets for taking eels, or a landing net used as auxiliary to angling with a rod or line."

He was afraid the Bill, as it stood, would cause serious damage to eel fishing in the Severn and Avon. That part of his Amendment which related to angling with a rod or line was intended to prevent the inconvenience which would probably arise to private anglers from the operation of the measure. He had no doubt that the different Boards of Conservators would make different bye-laws for their respective districts; and, therefore, it might happen that a man fishing one day within the district of one Conservancy Board would find his net came within the Board's regulations; while the next day, fishing within the district of another Board's jurisdiction, he might find his net was of an unlawful size, and he might possibly be fined for using it. Now, such a state of things would be inconvenient to everyone, and to a poor man it might be very oppressive. He hoped, therefore, his Amendment would meet with the approval of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert).

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 14, after Mr. Birkbeck's Amendment, at end of sub-section (1), insert "Provided, That no bye-law made under the authority of this section shall apply to any fixed nets for taking eels, or a landing net used as auxiliary to angling with a rod or line."—(*Mr. Hastings.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DODDS said, he hoped that the Government would accept the Amendment. It was one which he had already brought under their notice at the suggestion of one of the oldest anglers in the North of England.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. BIRKBECK then moved the next Amendment which stood in his name. Its provision had been of great use under the Salmon Fisheries Act, and he was quite sure it would be of great use under this Act.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 16, after "bye-law," insert "and provide for the seizure and for the forfeiture, on summary conviction, of nets, instruments, and devices used in contravention of any such bye-law, and of fish found in the possession of a person contravening any such bye-law, and of fish caught by any such means, or in any such manner, as is contrary to any such bye-law, and such fish shall be deemed to be illegally caught, and any such forfeiture may be enforced by a court of summary jurisdiction."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Short title and construction of Act 41 and 42 Vict. c. 39).

Mr. BIRKBECK proposed to exclude Scotland and Ireland, and the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the county of the city of Norwich, from the operation of the Act. The words he proposed to insert were the same as in the Act of 1878, and he understood the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) had no objection to their insertion in this Act.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 24, after "1878," to insert the words "and shall not extend to Scotland or Ireland, nor to the counties of Norfolk or Suffolk, or to the county of the city of Norwich."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Mr. HIBBERT said, he did not think these words were necessary; but if his hon. Friend wished to have them inserted he would consent to the Amendment.

Mr. WARTON was of opinion that the Amendment ought to form a separate clause, instead of being tacked on to Clause 2.

Mr. HIBBERT said, that perhaps the hon. Member (Mr. Birkbeck) would, before the Report stage, consider whether these words were really necessary. If the hon. Gentleman came to the conclusion that they could not do without these words, no doubt the House would accept them, and incorporate them in the Bill in the proper place, wherever that might be.

Mr. BIRKBECK said, he really thought the words were indispensable; but he would be very happy to consider the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), to insert them in the Bill in the form of a third clause.

Mr. HIBBERT: The hon. Member, then, will bring up this Amendment in the shape of a new clause?

Mr. BIRKBECK: I will.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. HIBBERT said, he wished to add a sub-section to Clause 2, to the effect that the expression "freshwater fish" meant any fish living permanently or temporarily in fresh water, exclusive of salmon.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 26, at end, insert the following sub-section:—"In the construction of this Act, the expression 'freshwater fish' means any fish living permanently or temporarily in freshwater, exclusive of salmon."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. BIRKBECK said, he wished now to move a new Clause, giving power to form Boards for coarse fish districts. The clause would supply a want which had been for a long time very largely felt throughout England. It would effect a very important object, and would apply to a great many counties—including Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Middlesex, Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, and Gloucestershire, and portions of other counties. The clause would give the power requisite for the purpose of protecting most important fisheries which had been, up to the present time, neglected. Without further words, he would move the Clause on the Paper.

Amendment proposed, after Clause 1, to insert the following Clause:—

(Power to form board for coarse fish district.)

"Fishery districts may be formed, and conservators appointed, for water frequented by any freshwater fish, and section six of 'The Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878,' shall apply as if 'freshwater fish' were therein substituted for 'trout or char,' and 'salmon trout or char,' and section twenty-seven of 'The Salmon Fishery Act, 1865,' shall apply as if 'freshwater fish' were therein substituted for 'salmon,' and any conservators so appointed shall have the powers conferred on conservators by 'The Salmon Fishery Act, 1876.'"—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

MR. BIRKBECK said, he wished also to move a new Clause dealing with powers of water bailiffs.

Amendment proposed,

(Powers of water bailiffs—28 and 29 Vic. c. 121; 36 and 37 Vic. c. 71.)

"In substitution for section eight of 'The Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878,' which shall be repealed, it is hereby enacted that section thirty-one of "The Salmon Fishery Act, 1865,' and sections thirty-six, thirty-seven, and thirty-eight of 'The Salmon Fishery Act, 1873' (which sections relate to the powers of water bailiffs), shall extend to all waters within the limits of this Act in like manner as if those sections were re-enacted in this Act, with the substitution of 'freshwater fish' for 'salmon,' and of 'waters frequented by freshwater fish' for 'salmon river,' and with a reference to 'The Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878,' and this Act, in substitution for the reference to the Salmon Fishery Acts, 1861 to 1873, or any of them."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he had a new Clause on the Paper with regard to the limitation of exemptions of the Freshwater Fisheries Act of 1878. The Act of 1878, it would be remembered, exempted from its operation all persons taking during the close season freshwater fish for use as bait. His Amendment proposed that no person should enjoy that exemption unless he was fishing in private waters. The proposal expressed the sense of a Resolution adopted on the 27th of June, 1881, at a meeting which took place in the Society of Arts Rooms, at which there were present upwards of 400 delegates and representatives from the various Angling Associations of the United Kingdom. The Resolution in question, he was informed, had been submitted to the Angling Association, and had received their approval. He had been requested to bring forward this proposal by the Angling Association of Sheffield; and he, therefore, moved that the words on the Paper be added to the Bill in the form of a new Clause.

Amendment proposed,

(Limitation of exemptions in Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878.)

"Sub-heads (c.) and (d.) of sub-section three, of section eleven of 'The Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878,' shall be read and construed as if, after the word 'taking,' in each of the said sub-heads, were inserted the words 'in any several fishery, with the leave of the owner of such fishery."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HIBBERT said, he was very sorry he could not accept the proposed new Clause. He felt bound to oppose it, because, in the first place, it would interfere with a compromise entered into at the time the Fisheries Act of 1878 was passing through the House. Sub-section 3 of Section 11 of the Fisheries Act was agreed to as a kind of compromise. He did not know that there would be any objection to the new Clause if it applied to public as well as private fisheries—if, in fact, in addition to the words proposed, the hon. Gentleman added, "or any public fishery with the consent of the Conservators." There were numerous cases in which it would be necessary to take fish for scientific purposes in public fisheries; but if the Clause were adopted in its present form there would be no right of doing that during close time.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he would recommend his hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) to accept the proposal of the hon. Gentleman who spoke on behalf of the Home Office. The Committee would remember that the Fisheries Act of 1878 had been very carefully considered by a Select Committee, and that before that Committee, amongst other authorities, the late Mr. Frank Buckland was examined. It was on the evidence of that gentleman that the Clause that it was now sought to amend was inserted. There were several interesting animals in the Zoological Gardens which it was necessary to feed with live fish, even during the breeding season of fish. For that reason, therefore, Sub-section (C.) was inserted; and in consequence of that provision divers and many other wild fowl were provided with food which would be impossible without this Clause. If it was desirable to limit the Clause he should be very glad to do so. As to what had been done by the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck), he must express his thanks for the able manner in which Amendments had been proposed. If the hon. Member (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) would bring up his Clause on Report, amended so as to include public fisheries as well as private fisheries, it would be probably desirable to include it in the Bill.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, he should be happy to consider the matter as to whether the Clause could not be brought up on Report. He should not have proceeded at all in this business had it not been for the fact that before he put down his Amendment there were very few Freshwater Fishery Boards in the country. The Amendment, however, of his hon. Friend the Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck) having been accepted, a great many more of these Boards would spring into existence—the condition of affairs would be very different now to what it had been.

Mr. DODDS also urged the Committee to allow the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), with the alteration proposed by the Government, to be put in the Bill. He trusted that those in charge of the Bill would consent to its being re-printed with the Amendments, and to a little time being allowed to elapse before the next stage was again taken. The Amendments were of a very important character, and it was desirable that the public out-of-doors should have time to consider them. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) should certainly be introduced into the Bill before Report, so that the measure might be sent down to the country for the opinion of those interested in it to be as complete as possible.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, the hon. Member had made a suggestion which he should be glad to comply with; but would he suggest how it was to be done? Impromptu drafting was a very dangerous matter.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he would propose to add the words—"and in any public fishery with the leave of the Conservators." If the Amendment with that alteration were inserted in the Bill it could be reconsidered on Report, and, if not approved of, struck out.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the Bill applied to Ireland?

Mr. HIBBERT: No.

Mr. HEALY desired to know why it was not stated at the end of the Bill that it did not apply to Ireland?

Mr. HIBBERT said, that it would be absolutely clear, from the text of the Bill, that it did not apply to Ireland.

Clause read a second time, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Clause, to add "in any public fishery with the leave of the Conservators."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. HEALY said, that the people of Ireland were very deeply interested in this question of River Conservators. He himself had attended an inquiry into the subject at Slaney, and he and his friends were opposed every inch by the Conservators, who, it was found, were the persons who paid the licence duty along the river. If the law were the same in England as it was in Ireland he thought these heavy powers given to the Conservators was iniquitous, and that something should be done to alter it. The Conservators, as a general rule, were the gentry of the district, who were all in favour of rod-fishing. [Mr. MUNDELLA dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) might shake his head; but he (Mr. Healy) could speak with certainty on this subject, particularly in regard to Ireland. At present, there was nothing in the Bill to show that it did not apply to Ireland.

MR. HIBBERT said, he could assure the hon. Member that the Bill did not apply to Ireland, and would not apply to Ireland if left in its present form. At the same time, if the hon. Member was anxious to have assurance doubly sure, he (Mr. Hibbert) should be quite prepared to put in words setting forth that the measure did not apply to Ireland. His hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Birkbeck) was prepared to put in words to exempt Scotland and Ireland, the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the county of the city of Norwich; and it was the fact that before anything was done under the Bill persons interested would be able to give evidence, either for or against the proposal, to the Home Office. He did not think there was any danger of infringing the rights of the poor, any more than the rights of any other class.

MR. HEALY said, this question of river fisheries was one which ought to be dealt with with the utmost care. In Ireland, for some extraordinary reason or other, the unfortunate fishermen had been deprived of Saturday for fishing; and it appeared to him that when they had a Bill of this kind before them they were presented with an opportunity, which otherwise would not occur, of endeavouring to amend the Fishery Laws, which, at the present moment, were all in favour of the swells. In his country the right of fishing on Saturday was taken from the fishermen, in order to give the gentry the privilege of killing fish on that day—the gentry had the right of killing also on Sunday if they chose. He did not know why legislation of this kind should be proceeded with in such a hurry, particularly when, if a day or two were granted, hon. Members might be able to bring forward Amendments which would have a very beneficial effect upon the industrial classes of Ireland. They should not deal with fisheries in this way — they should not, with indecent haste, adopt a measure which would affect the country at large; but they should give hon. Members an opportunity of putting down Amendments dealing with any part of this great question of the preservation of rivers; they should remember the case of the Blackwater. In that case the Duke of Devonshire alleged he held the river under a patent before King John from Lismore down to the sea. He (Mr. Healy) intended, at a convenient time, to bring in a Bill to meet this robbery by the noble Duke, the father of the Secretary of State for War—["Order!"] To his mind, it amounted to a theft of the people's rights by the Duke of Devonshire—["Order!"] He insisted upon using the expression. It was a robbery, under an old alleged patent, to deprive 400 or 500 men of their free rights of fishing—which rights they had possessed before 13 years of litigation and 11 trials with the Duke of Devonshire. Because the noble Duke had a long purse he had been enabled to deprive these unfortunate fishermen of their rights. Here they had a Bill brought in by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) and the hon. Gentleman opposite the Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. Hibbert) dealing with fisheries; and the Bill gave Members from Ireland an admirable opportunity of moving Amendments dealing with fisheries in their country—an opportunity they had every right to avail themselves of. He would, therefore, move that the Chairman do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Healy.*)

MR. MUNDELLA said, he hoped the hon. Member would not insist upon the Motion for reporting Progress—that he would give attention to the circumstances under which the Bill was introduced.

The Act of 1878, which he had had the honour of conducting through the House, had been passed with the sole object of protecting coarse freshwater fish during the breeding season. It had been promoted by the working class anglers of England, and had given them very great satisfaction. It had improved their sport and enjoyment; and he was sure the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) would be one of the last persons in the world to deprive working men of that. The object of the present Bill was merely to extend the benefits of the Act of 1878, which was the first Act that ever dealt with coarse fish. It prevented the undue destruction of the fish, and was, in that way, of advantage to the community, especially the poorer classes; and, therefore, as the present Bill was to render it more perfect, the measure before the Committee should receive the support of all those who sympathized with the working classes. If the hon. Member would turn to the 2nd clause of the Act of 1878, he would there find that the 3rd section said that the Act should not apply to Scotland or Ireland; and as the present Bill incorporated that Act, this measure, when it became law, would also not apply to Ireland. The hon. Member evidently had not the Act of 1878 before him, or he would see at once that there was no danger of any Irish fishermen being interfered with by the Bill. In this matter there was no question as to the fishing of the gentry —the Bill was intended solely for the purpose of improving the poor man's fishing—it was for the purpose of extending the benefit of an Act which was valued and appreciated by hundreds of thousands of working men.

Mr. O'SHEA said, the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake) and himself had a Bill, which they intended to bring in, dealing with the objection the hon. Member had brought forward with regard to Saturday close time in Ireland. He had happened to speak about the present Bill to the hon. Member for Waterford—who, as the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was aware, was one of the best authorities in the House on the subject of fishing—and the hon. Member assured him that he had no objection to this measure, as he believed it would be attended with great advantage to the poor fishermen of England.

Mr. HEALY said, with great respect, he would point out to his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Shea) that his object was not so much to give opposition to this Bill, as to endeavour to include in it clauses that would be to the advantage of the Irish fisheries. They had an extraordinary state of things in Ireland; and, with all respect to the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), he would point out that for two or three years he (Mr. Healy) had been anxious for an opportunity to do something for the fishery classes in his country; a private Member, however, had no kind of a chance of being able to make progress with a measure on such a subject as this. Here, however, they had a Bill brought in by the Government dealing with fisheries, and that gave them some slight chance of being able to effect something. For two or three years he had represented a fishing community, and, thanks to one of the Irish Fishery Inspectors, Mr. Brady —than whom no better Government official had ever lived—he had been able to obtain considerable advantages for the fishermen, although he had not been able to do all that he required. They had held an inquiry for two or three days into questions affecting the fishing industry; and he did not think it was too much to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to give them a day or two to look into the Bill, in order that they might take advantage of the information that they had obtained in that inquiry. At all events, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman not to proceed further with the Bill than this 2nd clause, which had been passed, so that they might have the opportunity of debating the question of Irish fisheries—["Divide!"] Hon. Gentlemen might be a little impatient; perhaps it was natural they should be. Irish questions were always troublesome —they were disgusting to Englishmen, just as English questions were disgusting to Irishmen. Let the Government give them until Monday to investigate the subject; that was not too much to ask. The Bill could not be blocked now, as they had got their second reading. He thought he could make out a case, and he should be delighted to have an opportunity of doing so, in favour of Irish fishermen. The Committee should remember this — that in Ireland they were altogether in the hands of three gentlemen—namely, Mr. Brady, Major Hayes, and another whose name he would not mention, not because he had any complaint to make against him, but because he did not take the same interest in the subject. As the hon. Gentleman the Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) knew perfectly well, the unfortunate fishing population of Ireland were not properly looked after. They had Ireland at their mercy in that House —there were 500 Englishmen to 20 or 30 Irishmen in it. What possible objection could there be to giving them a day or two? He put it to the Vice President of the Council to give them further time, if only till Monday. Let them pass the 2nd clause, but do not let them get out of Committee; that was all he asked.

MR. HIBBERT said, he should be glad to meet the views of the hon. Member if he thought the result could be in any way satisfactory. He did not object to consider the case the hon. Member proposed with reference to Ireland; but the Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878, and all the Acts incorporated in the present Bill, referred solely to England. [Mr. HEALY: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member would allow him to explain. The Bill referred to the Conservators who had been established all over England and Wales; and if the hon. Member wished to introduce any legislation in reference to Ireland in it, it would not be possible to introduce clauses or to carry them with any certainty that they would have the desired effect, seeing that the whole question had been dealt with upon a system which was solely applicable to England. In Ireland they had their own Salmon Fishery Acts and other Acts applying to fisheries. He should be glad to listen to the appeal of the hon. Member if he thought he could do it with any satisfaction; but he was sure that the hon. Member, after this explanation, would not press them. They had gone through all the clauses of the Bill; they were now on the last new clause but one, and in a few minutes the Bill should pass through Committee.

MR. HEALY said, he was very loth, indeed, to say anything in opposition to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert), who was one of the most fair-minded Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench; but he would point out the position they were placed in. Several Members, for two or three Sessions, had been seeking for an opportunity of dealing with the Irish freshwater fisheries. They had not found it. When would they find it? The Irish Members on the Treasury Bench did not care twopence for anything but their salaries; and the English Members on the Treasury Bench cared only for the interests of the English people. The Irish Members of the Government only wanted to draw their salaries and to get home as early as they could.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not in any way entitled to cast such imputations upon hon. Members.

MR. HEALY begged pardon if he had made an imputation offensive to those Gentlemen. What he had meant was that the Irish Members on the Treasury Bench had little sympathy with the majority of the Irish people, and had only their salaries to interest them in the affairs of Ireland; for if they held opinions at variance with their English Colleagues they would be crowded out. Would hon. Gentlemen opposite give a guarantee that they would bring in a Bill dealing with Irish freshwater fisheries? [Mr. DODDS: No.] The hon. Member for Stockton said "No;" and, of course, they gave his negative the full authority it was entitled to. Would hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench give the Irish Members any guarantee that an attempt would be made to meet the Irish case? It was understood in Ireland that there was a great grievance in that country on this question. The people generally saw some hope of getting the franchise. [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!] He was glad he had the approval of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport on that point. The Irish people saw some hope of getting the franchise, and were beginning to take an interest in what was done in Parliament. What, then, would be said of his Colleagues and himself if they allowed a Bill of this kind to pass, dealing only with England, without an attempt to get some of their own grievances redressed in it? He perfectly recognized the fact that the Bill was one dealing with England; but why on earth should not Irish Members endeavour to extract as much good for their own country from English Bills as was possible? What harm could there be in giving a day or two to Ireland in this matter? The Session was yet young—only a little of March had gone; and it, therefore, seemed to him that he could, with the greatest propriety, ask the Government to defer further progress with the Bill until Monday. Let the Irish case be debated on Monday—the case as to the Irish Conservators. Surely the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Vice President of the Council were reasonable men and could yield to a reasonable request.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he could not help sympathizing with the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) in his desire to direct attention to the fisheries in Ireland. There were a large number of people interested in those fisheries—a great many of his own constituents were. The whole of the fishing was in the hands of a comparatively small number of gentry who legislated for the fisheries and constructed bye-laws, the special object of which was to obstruct the fishermen in carrying out their avocation. The circumstance referred to by the hon. Member for Monaghan, in reference to a part of the Blackwater lower down than Mallow, was one of the most appalling instances of the evil effects of the old feudal laws which could be imagined. The rights of something like 2,000 fishermen in the Blackwater had been flagrantly violated—of course, in form of law; all outrages in Ireland were committed in form of law. The Duke of Devonshire, because he had an enormous income, because he could fee an enormous Bar, and carry on a litigation from Court to Court, from year to year, against the verdicts of five Irish juries, had at last, through the instrumentality of the House of Lords, obtained a decision which practically ruined a large number of poor people—which deprived a great many people of Youghal, and a great many persons who dwelt on the lower banks of the Blackwater, of their trade, or compelled them to pay heavy sums to this great English Duke to carry on an industry which they had been engaged in for years, and their ancestors before them had engaged in for centuries. He confessed, if there were other opportunities of introducing a subject of this sort, he should be loth to interpose in the discussion of a Bill which related solely to England; but, unfortunately, Irish Members could look to no facilities for legislation for their country in that House except when it was desired to pass coercive measures. Of those measures they had had enough. Almost all the Irish Business of this Session would be, more or less, distasteful to Ireland, or more or less useless to it; and whatever attempts Irish Members made to bring on Business they had very little chance of passing anything through. Irish Members, therefore, could look for no opportunities on purely Irish Bills; and, under the circumstances, they could be scarcely blamed if, on this Bill dealing with English freshwater fisheries, they ventured to remind the House of Commons that Irish freshwater fisheries presented a subject for legislation that was quite as well deserving of its attention. To his mind, the request that a day or two should be given to Irish Members to consider the Bill and see if any provisions could be introduced to mitigate the conditions under which Irish freshwater fishermen had to carry on their business was extremely reasonable.

Mr. HIBBERT repeated, that he should be willing to meet the views of the Irish Members on this question if he thought any good would come of it. In the Act of 1878 there was an express provision setting forth that the measure should not apply to Scotland or Ireland; and if clauses were inserted in the present Bill dealing with Ireland, they would be obliged to alter the whole of the operation of all the clauses. The Act of 1878 adopted several Salmon Fisheries Acts, which applied solely to England, and those Acts were incorporated in this Bill. If the views of the Irish Members were carried out the clause incorporating these Acts would become of a most complicated character. He should be perfectly willing to accede to a postponement of further progress if he thought it could be of the slightest use. The request of the Irish Members seemed, at first sight, to be a reasonable one; but, knowing so well the difficulties of the case, he really was obliged to refuse it.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, that hon. Members who had spoken against the Bill, or who had moved to report Progress, would see that it must be entirely impracticable to legislate for Ireland in a Bill which did not affect that country. If they persisted in their attempt to do so, the effect could only be to diminish, and not to increase, the opportunities of dealing with the Irish freshwater fisheries which might present themselves during the remainder of the Session. With the demand of the Irish Members for legislation on this subject there would be a great amount of sympathy amongst English Members; and it would be unwise to destroy that sympathy by unreasonably insisting upon dealing with Ireland in an English Bill.

Mr. GIBSON said, he had understood from the hon. Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) that he and the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake), who, they all knew, was the greatest authority on matters affecting fisheries in Ireland, intended to bring in a Bill dealing with those fisheries this Session. Perhaps when that Bill was before the House the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) would have the opportunity he desired of raising the questions to which reference had been made.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he had no doubt the hon. Member would then have the opportunity he sought, and he (Mr. O'Shea), therefore, appealed to him to withdraw his opposition. He could assure the House that the Irish Bill which it was proposed to introduce would be considered a very drastic one by many of those who were interested in rod-fishing in Ireland. His hon. Friend and he, however, were determined to make a great effort when their Bill was brought in to improve the condition of the fishermen of whom the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had spoken. The Bill would be so much in favour of those fishermen that it would, no doubt, meet with opposition outside the House on the part of those who had the monopoly of which the hon. Member for Mallow had complained. Opportunities would, on that Bill, be given to hon. Members for speaking at considerable length; they would be able to express their views with what force they might consider necessary; and no doubt the measure would receive the support of such Members as the hon. Member for Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck), who had the true interests of fishermen at heart. He did not think that a Bill like that the Committee were now considering—a Bill in favour of the poorer classes—should be further opposed by the Irish Members.

Mr. HEALY said, he would point out to the hon. Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) that any Bill he and the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake) might bring in, if it was, as it was described, a drastic measure, would, of course, be blocked by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and would never reach the stage reached by the Bill they were now considering. The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Hibbert) seemed to doubt whether it would be possible for the Irish Members to put down Amendments which would make this Bill applicable to Ireland. If the hon. Member would allow the Irish Members time, no doubt they would be able to show him that they could frame Amendments to the Bill, and then, when he had seen them, if he found them inapplicable, he could oppose them on their merits. The junior Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) was a skilful pilot of Bills. They all knew how successfully he managed the Bill dealing with Friendly Societies last year. Well, the right hon. Gentleman must know very well that the loss of two days in March was a matter of great insignificance. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench should be frank; they should say at once they were afraid of having the Blackwater Fishery case raised. ["No, no!"] Then, if they were not, if the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had no objection to having the whole of the devices of the Duke of Devonshire exposed to the House—for the Irish Members would be able to expose as clear a case of robbery as ever was committed——

Lord EDWARD CAVENDISH: I rise to Order, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I must really say I hope the hon. Gentleman will see that such language, as applied to a Member of the other House, is most indecorous and improper.

Mr. HEALY: As I have your ruling on that point, Sir Arthur Otway, I, of course, accept it; but I should have been glad if the correction had come from someone else than the noble Lord opposite. I think it would have been more decent in him, as the son of the Duke of Devonshire, to have left it to someone else to take exception to my language. ["Order!"] I think I am quite in Order.

Mr. DODDS: I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to ask you whether the hon. Member is in Order in what he has done—whether he ought not to be called on to withdraw?

Mr. HEALY: I am always happy to accept your ruling, Sir, and I venture to say that no hon. Gentleman in the House can point out a case in which I have refused to accept it. But I say that on a question having reference to the Blackwater Fishery it would have been much more in keeping with decency if I had been called to Order by someone else than the son of the Duke of Devonshire, a Nobleman who receives thousands a-year out of the robbery of the unfortunate people——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has repeated the observation for which I called him to Order. Once I passed it over, hoping that he would see the impropriety of the observation, and once I cautioned him; he has now repeated the word. I have to say that it is out of Order, as well as being indecorous, to make such an imputation on a Member of the other House.

Mr. HEALY said, that that being so, he would withdraw the expression. He would put it in this way. Seeing that the Duke of Devonshire gained so much out of the cotmen on the waterside, it would have been much more decent if some other Member than the son of the noble Duke had risen to object to the reference which had been made to his conduct. He would ask hon. Members to remember this fact—that the Irish Members had not the smallest chance of being able to raise these questions except on an English Bill. Under the circumstances, therefore, he thought the request that an adjournment until Monday should take place on the Committee stage was a very reasonable one. They only asked for to-morrow to consider the Bill, and surely that was not an unreasonable request to make at 20 minutes past 2 in the morning. He was surprised that Gentlemen like the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Vice President of the Council, who both represented Democratic constituencies, should object to his proposal. If the Irish Members had been neglectful of the interests of their country up to this, was that any reason why they should continue neglectful of those interests?

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY remarked, that looking at the fact that there were so few Irish Members present, it would be impracticable to get those Amendments which might be considered necessary put down.

Mr. HEALY said, the Irish Members would plead guilty to having been neglectful of Irish freshwater fisheries in the past. Give them until Monday, however, so that the impractibility of putting down Amendments might be demonstrated. The Bill, if it was a good one, could not possibly suffer by the delay. He should be content to withdraw the question of the Blackwater Fishery if it would please the noble Lord who was so anxious for the reputation of his noble Father. They would not raise the question of the Blackwater Fishery and of the thousands gained by the Duke of Devonshire. They would simply stick to the question of the Saturday close time, and upon that point he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) what his objection was to making provision in this Bill for the removal of so great a grievance of the Irish fishermen? He did not think this grievance existed in England, and English Members could not be expected to understand Irish Law; but there was a higher law which said—"Six days shalt thou labour." And what he wanted to know was, whether the Irish fishermen were to be prevented from labouring the full number of days they were entitled to? The conduct of the English Members on the Treasury Bench was unreasonable. It might be that the Irish Members would find it impossible to put down Amendments. If that was so, though the Bill might be delayed, the delay would be so slight that the measure would not suffer, whilst a concession would have been made to the Irish Members and to an impoverished class, not one in 20 of whom had a vote—the Committee would have allowed the Representatives of the Irish people to look into the question to see if anything could be done for the Irish fishermen in this Bill.

Mr. BIGGAR considered that a more unreasonable position than that taken up by the Government could not possibly be assumed. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had said it was impossible to frame these Amendments. Well, if they could not, if the adjournment asked for were granted, on Monday the Committee would be able to dispose of the Bill without difficulty and controversy. It would not make 10 minutes difference; in fact, not half so much time would be wasted on Monday as had been wasted that night on the question. The hon. Member for Clare (Mr. O'Shea) had given them a most absurd reason, so far as he could form an opinion, why the Irish Members should give way on this matter. He had told them that he and the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake) were going to bring forward a Bill which would excite a great deal of opposition. If it was a fact that the Bill would excite a great deal of opposition, it seemed to him that the chances of its being passed into law that Session were very slight. What difference could it make whether this Bill passed on the 6th, or 9th, or 10th of March? The difference was of such a slight nature that it mattered nothing. The Bill, at its present stage, could not be blocked; and he must say he had never seen a more glaring instance of the determination of the Government not to yield to reasonable requests than this. If the Government did not yield, he and his Friends should certainly, when addressing assemblages of Irishmen in England on St. Patrick's Day, have to say that the Government was not worthy of the support of Irish votes, and that wherever Irish votes had any influence in deciding an election Ministerial candidates should be rejected.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *added* to the Bill.

MR. BIRKBECK said, he would now move, as a new Clause, the words of the Amendment he had originally intended to move in Clause 2.

Amendment proposed,

To add the following new Clause:—"This Act shall not extend to Scotland or Ireland, nor to the counties of Norfolk or Suffolk, or to the county of the city of Norwich."—(*Mr. Birkbeck.*)

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Preamble *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman report the Bill, as amended, to the House."

MR. DODDS expressed a hope that the hon. Member in charge of the Bill (Mr. Hibbert) would delay the Report stage until Monday week and would have the measure reprinted, so that it might be circulated throughout the country with the important alterations which had been introduced that night. He believed the Government would not object to that course.

MR. HIBBERT said, he should be happy to agree to the proposal of the hon. Member.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* 17th March, and to be *printed.* [Bill 129.]

SUMMARY JURISDICTION OVER CHILDREN (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 75.]

(*Mr. Gibson, Sir Richard Wallace, Mr. Blake, Mr. Corry.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

MR. HEALY wished to ask Mr. Speaker whether it was not the fact that on a Bill of this kind he did not leave the Chair without Question?

MR. GIBSON said, he had a few words to say in explanation of the Bill, but he should be quite happy for Mr. Speaker to leave the Chair at once, if hon. Gentlemen desired it.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly in Order.

MR. GIBSON repeated his willingness to allow Mr. Speaker to leave the Chair without making any observations, and that it was only as a matter of courtesy that he proposed, in a couple of sentences, to state the object of the measure. The Bill, as anyone could see, was intended to mitigate the position of children and young persons who were brought before the Summary Tribunals in Ireland—to enable those Tribunals to mitigate the position of children and young persons. It would provide that under no Act should it be possible, on summary conviction, for any child to be sentenced to a larger term of imprisonment than one month, or to be ever fined a larger amount than 40*s*. The measure would also give ample jurisdiction to magistrates, in proper cases, to inflict no punishment whatever on a child, but to allow it to go away with its parents. He had omitted a clause in the original drafting, one which was not absolutely necessary so far as the aim and intention of the Bill were concerned. It was one, however, which it had been pointed out it would be well to put in, as it gave the right of appeal to young children even where mitigated sentences were inflicted.

Mr. HEALY said, there was one point the right hon. and learned Gentleman must give attention to. There must be a clause in the Bill, a distinct provision, to the effect that the parent of a child should be summoned to attend the Court. It was unfortunate that there was no provision in the Bill setting forth that no child should be condemned to sleep on a plank bed. He remembered, when he was in prison, an unfortunate child crying the whole night; he did not know what for, but he heard its wail along the corridor. If any hon. Member had seen a plank bed, he would be convinced that it was a most cruel thing to condemn a miserable little arab off the streets to sleep on it. He would suggest, in the first place, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should insert a provision in the Bill, to the effect that parents and guardians should be summoned to the Court; and then, again, in Clause 18, that no child should be compelled to sleep on a plank bed. Did he understand the right hon. and learned Gentleman to object to these proposals?

Mr. GIBSON could not say whether he would be able to consent before the Government had had time to consider the matter.

Mr. HEALY said, he should like to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman intended to proceed with the Committee stage that night, because, if he did, he (Mr. Healy) should have to move Amendments to prevent children under 12 years of age being sentenced to the plank bed? It was an abominable thing to sentence little children to such a hardship. Hon. Gentlemen would not put their dogs or horses to sleep under such conditions as persons with human bodies, and souls made in the image of God, were condemned to. The plank bed system was an infamous one, which ought not to be tolerated; therefore, he trusted he should have the sympathy of the right hon. and learned Gentleman in the proposals he intended making. As to the summoning of parents and guardians to the Court, the right hon. and learned Gentleman might say it would be an understood thing that they should be present. But let it be laid down in the law that they should attend, and let their attendance be vital.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would also reconsider the propriety of giving magistrates the power to order children to be flogged, even by the birch rod, by policemen.

Mr. GIBSON said, the sections of the Bill were already the law of England, and had been found to work most beneficially. It was generally known that he was proposing to incorporate in the law of Ireland provisions to be found in the law of England; therefore he did not like to introduce in his Bill any changes which were not in the law of England. In substance, he agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy); and if any controversy was likely to arise he should be willing to report Progress directly after getting into Committee, to let the proposals which had been made stand over for consideration.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Summary trial of children for indictable offences unless objected to by parent or guardian).

Mr. HEALY said, he wished to propose to insert, in line 14, after the word "informed," the words "after being summoned to attend." He thought it only reasonable to provide that a summons should be issued to enable people to attend, because the Committee must not forget that they were dealing with the children of the poor.

Mr. GIBSON referred the hon. Member to Sub-section 3.

Mr. HEALY said, he was aware of that provision.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was on the Select Committee upon this Bill, and every syllable of it was threshed out with the most anxious care on the part of many hon. Members to watch the interests of the children, and with the greatest jealousy. The hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), and several other hon. Members who took the keenest and most benevolent interest in the matter, were on the Committee, and Sub-section 3 was put in to meet this very point. He was quite aware that this clause did not state specifically that in every case the parents or guardians should be present; but it was drafted in the interest of children, and as many of these children were waifs and strays, if it was provided specifically that parents or a guardian should attend, there would be many cases of great hardship. Perhaps the hon. Member would not press his objection here, but make his observations on Sub-section 3. He thought the hon. Member would find that that sub-section had been framed with an anxious desire to do what was right in the matter. The hon. Member for Durham (Mr. Thompson) had spoken early with reference to an Amendment he had on the Paper; and, after carefully considering that Amendment, he had arranged with the hon. Member that the hon. Member would put that Amendment on the Paper, so that it might be considered on the Report stage. It required a great deal of care; but he hoped this section would be allowed to pass, as it would, he believed, carry out the very reasonable object of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy).

MR. HEALY said, he had read Sub-section 3, and it scarcely met his point. The hon. Member for Durham—a Gentleman for whom Members on this side had very great respect—had spoken to him and his hon. Friends with regard to the sub-section; but it did not meet what they wished. It was no answer to say that this Bill applied to England; they had not to do with paupers in England, but in their own country. [Mr. GIBSON said, it worked well in England.] That did not show that it worked well in Ireland. The magistates in England belonged to the people; but in Ireland they did not. Appointing a magistrate in Ireland was like putting a beggar on horseback. There were no people who were greater lovers of justice than the people of Ireland; but he would not trust these magistrates a single inch under this Bill. There might be cases in which the children of an evicted tenant were brought before an evicting landlord. While the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was on the Bench the people had the greatest confidence in him, because they knew him to be every inch a gentleman, and to have the interests of Ireland at heart—he wished some Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench had the same interest in Ireland—but, at the same time, the right hon. and learned Member was full of a lawyer's instincts, and suspected any changes in a Bill which he had drafted. [Mr. GIBSON said, he had not drafted the Bill.] Well, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had copied it. The argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not meet his point. What guarantee was there in this Bill? There ought to be a statement in the Bill that the parents or guardian should be summoned. He did not think that was too much to ask. When they were dealing with the children of unfortunate parents—with children who were waifs and strays—they ought to be careful to provide that the parents or guardian should be summoned. As a general rule, the parents would be glad to have the children taken off their hands, and, therefore, he should move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 14, after the word "informed," to insert the words "after being summoned to attend."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GIBSON said, it was next to impossible for a private Member to pass a Bill. This was a Bill which everyone desired to pass in the interest of poor children, and everyone would desire that it should not be wrecked. He should be anxious to make every concession he could; but he could see that this Amendment might possibly lead to tremendous injustice to children.

MR. HEALY said, he did not wish to go on with the Amendment after what the right hon. and learned Gentleman had said, and he would ask leave to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. O'BRIEN said, he wished to move the omission of Sub-section (d).

MR. HEALY said, that before this was put, as he had withdrawn his

Amendment, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would now make some concession. He had said that he should move words providing that no child should be compelled to sleep on plank beds; and he trusted the right hon and learned Gentleman would make some reasonable concession.

Mr. GIBSON said, that was a matter which no private Member had a right to agree to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, to insert the words "that no child shall be compelled to sleep on a plank bed."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. COURTNEY said, this was a matter of very great nicety, and if Amendments were to be brought forward it was necessary they should be put on the Paper. He should, therefore, move that Progress be reported, in order that these Amendments might be placed on the Paper and considered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, he wished to suggest that as the Committee had advanced considerably with this Bill, the hon. Member should postpone this point to a later stage, so that they might get a little further with the Bill.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was willing to meet the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) as far as he could; but it would be impossible for him, as a private Member, to agree to a provision which might interfere with prison arrangements. He naturally had a great interest in seeing a Bill of this kind pass; and he would put it to the hon. Member whether he would not allow this Amendment to be withdrawn now and postponed to the Report stage?

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

——o——

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS IN ENGLAND (SUNDAY).

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Moved an Address for—

"Return similar to No. 127, of 1882, and completed to the 29th day of September 1883, regarding the Arrests for Drunkenness on Sunday in England."—(*Mr. Onslow.*)

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, in moving for this Return, he wished to express a hope that, though there might be some difficulty in the matter, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Hibbert) would issue instructions that the Return should be made out as soon as possible. The second reading of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (England) Bill was down for April 2, and he did not think it was any fault of his own that the Return had not been issued before. He moved for it as an unopposed Return last year; but there was no record of its having been moved for and ordered, though he had a positive recollection of that having been done. There was now less than a month before the Bill would come on, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would give orders for it to be issued as soon as possible.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he should be very glad to expedite the issue of the Return as soon as possible; but he could not explain why it had not been previously issued.

Motion *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (BRITISH INDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY).—RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company, for the conveyance of the Mails between the Port of Aden and the Port of Sindi, be approved."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Mr. HEALY said, he thought it was rather objectionable that a matter of this kind should be only on the Paper for one day. There was a Motion next to this of a similar kind, and he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared to give any explanation with regard to Ireland?

Mr. COURTNEY said, he would put off the next Resolution.

Resolution *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (MESSRS. G. AND J. BURNS).

RESOLUTION POSTPONED.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he thought it better to put off this Resolution until the Postmaster General had had communication with the North and West of Ireland.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he should be very glad if this Resolution was put off, although, as far as he was concerned, he thought the argument raised in regard to the Larne and Stranraer route was very absurd.

Mr. HEALY asked the hon. Member if he could state whether the Postmaster General would make a statement upon this subject?

Mr. COURTNEY said, he would acquaint the Postmaster General with what had happened; but he could give no further undertaking.

Resolution *postponed.*

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation in Session 1883 be referred to the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation."—(*Mr. Marjoribanks.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, *7th March,* 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Mr. Speaker's Retirement.*

TUNIS—CONSULAR JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord LAMINGTON, in rising to call the attention of the House to the recent transfer of British Consular jurisdiction over British subjects in the Regency of Tunis to the French tribunals lately established in that country; and to ask Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in consequence of such surrender, Her Majesty's Government proposes to take any steps as to the abrogation of Consular jurisdiction or modification of the capitulations in Egypt? said, he wished to do so, because the Regency of Tunis possessed a British Colony, numbering at least 11,000 persons, most of these Colonists being Maltese. England had, for 200 years, consistently resisted the endeavours of France to acquire predominance in Tunis, and, with that object, had always maintained the political dependence of Tunis as a Province of the Ottoman Empire. England enjoyed the Treaty rights of the "most favoured nation" in Tunis since 1651. She possessed (1), the exclusive power of judging her own subjects; and (2), certain important commercial privileges. In 1871, the Sultan—mainly at the suggestion of England—affirmed his relations with Tunis by a new Firman, concerning which both the Bey and the Sultan received our diplomatic congratulations. At that time, the Treaty then existing between this country and Tunis, as well as those between Tunis and other Powers, were renewed. A Liberal Ministry was at that time in power. Ten years later (1881)—the present Ministry being in power—the French Republic invaded the Regency of Tunis on the flimsy pretext of frontier raids supposed to have been committed by persons called Kroumirs. In the result, the French eventually occupied the whole country with an army of 40,000 men, and now this country was excluded from exercising any political influence in the affairs of Tunis. M. Barthélémy Saint Hilaire gave Lord Lyons, on two occasions, the most positive and categoric assurances that France sought only the punishment of the lawless frontier tribes. In consequence of these assurances, the English Representative advised the Bey to comply with the demands of France. On the 12th of May, a French General appeared in force before the Bey's palace, and compelled him to sign the Treaty of Kasr-es-Said. By Article 4 of that Convention, France agreed to guarantee the execution of the Treaties at present existing between the Government of the Regency and the different European Powers. Six days later, England, in virtue of her ancient Treaties with Tunis, constituted by an Order in Council, called the Ottoman Order of 1881, a British Consular Court at Tunis. Her Majesty's Government admitted so recently as 1881, that Tunis was a portion of the Ottoman Empire, in which other Governments had no moral and international right to interfere; and, subsequently, on the 7th of May, Lord Granville wrote thus to Lord Lyons—

> "Any measures which would affect the existing state of the African Provinces on the Medi-

terranean could not be matter of indifference to the European Powers, many of whom, like Great Britain, have special Treaties with Tunis, entitling them to most-favoured nation treatment in the Regency, while all would, it is to be presumed, lay claim to such treatment under their Treaties with the Porte."

On the 20th of May—the very day after the issue of the Ottoman Order in Council—Lord Granville again wrote to Lord Lyons thus—

> "In order that there may be no misapprehension hereafter, Her Majesty's Government desire explicitly to state that the general Convention of the 19th of July, 1875, between the Governments of Great Britain and Tunis, is, and remains in force. This Treaty secures to British subjects, vessels, commerce, and navigation, all the privileges, favours, and immunities which might then or thereafter be granted to the subjects, vessels, commerce, and navigation of any other nation whatever. . . . Her Majesty's Government feel confident that M. Barthélémy Saint Hilaire will appreciate the friendly intentions of Her Majesty's Government in being thus explicit in their views with regard to the rights of British subjects under existing Treaties."

In March, 1882, M. Peter Paul Cambon became French Resident in Tunis, and, at the same time, Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this last capacity he claimed to be sole intermediary between the Representatives of the Powers and the Beylical Government. Since that time the complaints of ill-treatment by British subjects had been frequent and serious. In fact, M. Cambon openly stated that redress of grievances on the part of the Tunisian authorities would be made difficult, if not impossible, in order to compel the Foreign Powers to abandon the Consular jurisdiction they enjoyed by Treaty. The consequence of such a course of procedure as was comprised in that intimation was a practical denial of justice wherever a British subject was the complainant and a Tunisian the subject of the complaint; and, as a result, the Foreign Office had a list of pending differences of the most serious description. Six months ago the French authorities opened French Courts in the City of Tunis and elsewhere; and then, on the 30th of December, 1883, only a few weeks before the assembling of Parliament, and without waiting to consult that body at all—without any definite settlement as to the equitable adjustment of pending cases, and without any reference to the relative position of France and England in Egypt—an Order in Council was issued by Her Majesty's Government abolishing the Consular Courts in Tunis, and surrendering our own exclusive jurisdiction over our own subjects, not to the Tunisian authorities, but to the French Courts which had been recently established, and of the working of which no opinion could possibly be formed. As he had said, there were 12,000 British subjects resident in Tunis, the whole of whom had been so handed over, and, as a consequence, had lost their nationality entirely. To his idea, that was a strange and extraordinary proceeding. Would the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs explain this strange change of policy? The answer of the noble Earl might be that this was a *fait accompli;* but he (Lord Lamington) wanted to see the Papers and Correspondence, in order to learn what arguments were used. If the proceeding held good in regard to Tunis, it might also be applied to Tripoli and to Egypt. It seemed to him that Mr. Gladstone's Administrations were famous for giving up our possessions and authority in other countries; for when the right hon. Gentleman was in Office so far back as 1864, or thereabouts, he gave up the Ionian Islands. But now, having directed attention to the transfer of British Consular jurisdiction over British subjects in Tunis, he (Lord Lamington) wished to ask the noble Earl the Question of which he had given Notice—Whether, in consequence of such surrender, Her Majesty's Government proposed to take any steps for the abrogation of Consular jurisdiction or modification of the Capitulations in Egypt?—for it was strange that, being in Egypt, and having now possession of that country—though only, it might be said, for a temporary purpose—they were not abolished there. But the French Capitulations still remained there, and enabled the French to publish a paper daily, which contained abusive articles against England; and yet there was no power to stop it, because it was under French protection. Even the decree of the Khedive could not stop it, and his Government were impotent in carrying the decree out. He did not himself approve of the occupation of Egypt; but as this country was there in possession, the Government ought, as the French in Tunis, to have the courage of their opinions; and having allowed the Consular Courts to be abolished in

Tunis, and British subjects there to be handed over to the French Courts, they should abolish the Capitulations in Egypt. That would be a consistent course to follow, and the British Government would then assume her proper position in Egypt.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I wish to begin by pointing out to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Lamington) that he said that the Ionian Islands were abandoned by Mr. Gladstone's Administration. That was not so. If I recollect rightly, Mr. Gladstone was sent out as High Commissioner by a Conservative Government, and those Islands were subsequently given up by Lord Palmerston's Government. With regard to the Question the noble Lord has put to me, I rather expected, both from the form of the Question and the subject under discussion, that the noble Lord would have confined himself to the recent action which he has, quite inaccurately, described as having been taken by Her Majesty's Government in Tunis. But he is perfectly right to do as he has done, to go further back, and ask why we did not oppose the French occupation of Tunis. There was no concealment of our policy in that respect. Her Majesty's Government thought that there was a concurrence of circumstances which made it difficult, if not impossible, to oppose the occupation by the French of Tunis. That being the case, we thought it was neither desirable for our interests, nor consistent with our dignity, to do what has been done in the case of Algeria; for we went on making abortive protests against the occupation of Algeria by the French, and at last we were obliged to give it up. We thought it was of no use, if we did not mean to oppose it, to keep up any form of that sort, and I am bound to say that, excepting from the noble Earl on the Bench opposite (the Earl De La Warr) and one or two individual Members in the other House of Parliament, there has not been the slightest complaint for two years past of that policy. But that being the policy, whether right or wrong, the question arises as to what right we had to abolish the capitulations of Tunis. The noble Lord asks that question, and, in reply, I say that they have not been abolished. What has been changed is the Consular jurisdiction, and that only. I think your Lordships are aware that that Consular jurisdiction is a very anomalous state of things, and that it is only justifiable, in certain circumstances, by the mode in which justice is administered in different countries. But when we have to deal with a country like France, one of the most civilized in the world, and whose justice stands so high, then the anomaly becomes very great indeed, and is one which it is not desirable to keep up. I may appeal to the noble Earl opposite to say what is the feeling of Englishmen in Tunis on this subject. I believe the noble Earl is interested in a Company who have a concession of a particular kind from the Government of Tunis, and on the proposition of that Company and upon their demand before this change was made, they insisted upon a clause which secured to them that if any differences arose, those differences should be referred to the French tribunal and not to the Native one. That shows the evil is not so great as the noble Lord has assumed. The Courts are constituted like the Courts at Havre and Marseilles, or anywhere else, and there would be an appeal to the highest Consular Court in France. We have reserved entirely the remainder of the Capitulations and all our ancient Treaty rights to which the noble Lord has alluded. We agreed to this abolition of Consular jurisdiction, as all the Powers have done with the exception of Russia, which is waiting for some matter of form, and that only subject to the perfectly fair and equitable arrangement at present existing as regards all claims against Tunis. That is the substance of the case, though I might go into more detail. I think that shows that what we have done is not hurtful to the interests of our fellow-countrymen, and certainly not to the interests of this country. But the noble Lord said—"If you have abolished the Capitulations in Tunis"—which we have not done—"why do you not abolish the Capitulations in Egypt?" The analogy is between the Consular jurisdiction in the one country and the other. It happens that, by successive steps, the Consular jurisdiction of all the other countries of Europe in Egypt is extremely limited; and I do not believe one case arises in them in a month for Mr. Cookson to try. As it is now, all the Powers have agreed to the general principle, subject to the consideration of a Commission, that the criminal jurisdiction should be extended to the International tribunals, and all the practical objects which the noble Lord desires will be attained by that arrangement.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I wish to add my testimony to what has been said by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville), that the abolition or suspension of the Consular Courts in Tunis is, under existing circumstances, not a matter to complain of. The question of the Capitulations is one of the most difficult and complicated of modern times. I think that there is no doubt that in the past they have done more to injure the Turkish Empire than any other circumstance. They have paralyzed the Turkish Government in its own home, and on its own soil, and made the levying of taxes at Constantinople almost a matter of impossibility; and I will certainly say that, where other circumstances are equal, if it be possible to obtain judiciary systems more suitable to modern ideas, it will be far better to substitute them for the old Consular jurisdictions, which, I think, never worked very well. In Cyprus we substituted the English Courts upon the English plan for the Courts of the Capitulations, the Consular Courts; and the French Government, though they made a certain remonstrance at the time, received from us arguments very much of the same character that the noble Earl has given to the House, and gave way in a very ready manner. I believe on both sides that is a sound view to take, and, so long as you are dealing with a Power like France, the character and integrity of whose Courts you can thoroughly trust, I think it wise to accept their Courts as not only a fitting, but a desirable, substitute for the old Consular jurisdiction. With respect to Egypt, I believe the case is more complicated; still I am not one of those who very much admire the International tribunals set up some years ago. They have done a certain amount of good work, but, undoubtedly, there are many considerations of difficulty in connection with their operation. Without asking the noble Earl—it would be hardly fair to do so—what he intends to do with respect to the particular question brought forward by my noble Friend behind me

(Lord Lamington), I am bound to say that the establishment of the International Courts does not seem to me a sufficient ground for ousting the supreme power, whatever it is, of such jurisdiction as may be necessary for political purposes. To plead the existence of these International Courts, or any doctrines founded on the Capitulations, against such authority as may be necessary to prevent the uttering of seditious publications, injurious to the Government actually in power, whatever that Government may be, seems to me to be decidedly straining the tenor of the Capitulations, straining the agreement under which International Courts were set up, and by a claim which the English Government would be justified in resisting.

EARL DE LA WARR said, he wished to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) for some further explanation. He wanted to know whether civil as well as criminal cases were to go before the French Courts?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I can only repeat what I stated before, that the rights are reserved as to criminal cases, and the only change regards the abolition of Consular jurisdiction. I am not sure that I was absolutely correct when I stated that all the European Powers have agreed in principle to the transference of the criminal jurisdiction to the International tribunals in Egypt. Russia, Italy, Austria, and France have expressed opinions favourable to that principle; but I now remember that Germany has not expressed any opinion on the subject. I have, however, reason to believe that the opinion of that Power will be favourable to the principle.

COUNTY AND BOROUGH FRANCHISE (IRELAND) RETURN.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK, in rising to ask the Lord President of the Council, Whether he can state when the County and Borough Franchise (Ireland) Return, ordered by the House on the 7th February, 1884, is likely to be laid before the House; and whether steps will be taken to hasten its production, so that it will be available for reference in both Houses of Parliament during the progress of the Franchise

Bill? said, he would wish to explain the object he had in view, and in doing so he thought they might assume, from what they had heard, that it was intended by the Government to introduce a household franchise for the whole of the United Kingdom. He did not, of course, intend to allude to any actual measure that had been introduced "elsewhere;" but he desired to obtain some information as to the classes who would, under a household suffrage in Ireland, acquire a vote. The real part of the Return was, that not only the number, but the value, of the inhabited houses in Ireland should be given. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Carlingford), on a former occasion, when he (the Earl of Limerick) asked for the Return on the 7th of February, refused to grant it, on the ground of the trouble and burden it would impose on the Department that would have to prepare it, and also because of the cost that would be incurred in producing it in a limited time. Under ordinary circumstances, these reasons might apply; but the circumstances now were not ordinary. He need hardly say that their Lordships had been of opinion that the Return was one which it was desirable to produce; and, that being so, he thought it was desirable that it should be produced, so that it might be used during the debate on the Franchise Bill for the purposes of reference. A very voluminous Return on the subject had been laid on the Table of the House the other day; but it did not meet the point he laid stress on, inasmuch as it did not give the rating of the houses, or indicate the class of persons who inhabited them. He might say that the reason he desired the Return was because he believed it was intended to extend household suffrage to Ireland. Ireland, it was said, was to be included on some broad, general principles. He did not know what those broad, general principles were, unless they were, indeed, some treaty or understanding between certain persons and the Government to facilitate the passage of the Bill. It was said that excluding Ireland would make the law unfair between the two countries; but he would venture to say that household suffrage in Ireland would mean something very different from the same franchise in England. If the voting power in Ireland, now numbering 230,000, was increased by 500,000, a class of voters would be introduced that did not exist in any very great numbers in England; and, in the name of household franchise, a poor and illiterate class would be introduced to such an extent that it would give the control of a very great number of the constituencies in Ireland to the occupants of mud hovels, and these mud-hovellers would not only control numbers of Parliamentary elections in Ireland, but would very greatly influence legislation in the Imperial Parliament. For these reasons he desired to get immediately this Return, which would throw light on the whole matter.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in reply, said, that he would not argue at present the question of the franchise with the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Limerick), as they would have ample opportunities to do so in due time. He thoroughly understood the object of the noble Earl, even before he declared it in his speech. As to the Returns, he had to say that the noble Earl was under a misconception in fancying that the information was in the hands of the Government and that it could be produced without a great amount of labour. He (Lord Carlingford) had not over-rated, but, on the contrary, had rather under-rated, the trouble and cost of preparing the Return. The House had ordered it, however, and he had to tell the noble Lord that special means had been taken to hasten its production, and that every effort would be used to produce it with all reasonable speed.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 7th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Public Accounts; Dublin Museum of Science and Art; East Indian Railways *nominated.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works (Various Powers).

PUBLIC BILL—*Committee* — *Report* — Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) * [125].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

(*By Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the attention of the House had already been called by various Members to this Bill, and he was sorry to say that the Notice of opposition which had been given to the measure by the hon. Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) rendered it necessary for him to encroach more than he usually did upon the time of the House in order to explain a few of the salient points of the Bill which he had reason to know were objected to. He would pass over the preliminary clauses of the Bill in order at once to come to these salient points. The first desire of the Metropolitan Board of Works, who promoted the Bill, was to make two small street improvements, one of which was a new street in continuation of Clarence Road, commencing in the Kentish Town Road, at the junction therewith of Clarence Road, and terminating at the junction of Great College Street and King's Road, wholly in the parish of St. Pancras; and the other was a new street connecting Cotton Street with Preston's Road, in the parish of All Saints', Poplar, commencing in Cotton Street at its junction with Wells Street, and terminating in Preston's Road at its junction with Bedford Street. Nobody made any objection to the street improvement in Kentish Town. It was not necessary, therefore, that he should make any observation upon it; but with regard to the Poplar improvement certain papers had been placed in his hand which alleged that the Metropolitan Board were anxious to evade their responsibilities in regard to the accommodation of the working classes. He wished to give a most distinct denial to that charge. They had long had under consideration the best means of accommodating the whole of the people whom it was intended to displace; and everybody in the district was in favour of the Bill. Indeed, the Poplar District Board intended to contribute one-half of the expenses; and although he did not know who had issued the circular to which he referred, in that respect it was entirely inaccurate, and the persons who had issued it might have spared themselves the trouble. Clause 39 of the Bill was one of the provisions of the most vital importance which the measure contained. It was a clause to extend the time limited for the compulsory purchase of certain lands under the Act obtained by the Metropolitan Board in 1877 in regard to the Western improvements. He thought that everybody would allow that a new street 60 feet wide from Charing Cross to Tottenham Court Road, and another from Regent Street up to New Oxford Street, were most desirable improvements so far as the Metropolis was concerned. They would have been finished long before this but for the unfortunate 33rd section of the Act of 1877, which had acted as a bar ever since the Act was passed. That clause required that before throwing open to the public any new streets provision should be made for the accommodation of the labouring classes who were displaced by the making of such new streets. That clause had so impeded the operations of the Metropolitan Board, and, in point of fact, the Act was found to be so unworkable and so useless in every shape and form, that it had been reconsidered by a Committee, over which the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) presided, who recommended that its provisions should be mitigated. The Metropolitan Board had now, in consequence, been able to clear a part of the land, and two blocks of buildings were being erected; and as soon as they were finished, which he thought would be about the month of October if this Bill were passed, the Board would be able to proceed with their improvements, and it was hoped that in the course of a year and a-half, or two years, these two great improvements, which were most necessary for, and would be most useful to, the Metropolis, would be entirely and in every shape completed. Clause 40 repealed the 33rd section of the Act of 1877, so far as it imposed obligations upon the Board with respect to providing accommodation for such of the labouring classes as would be displaced by the making of the new street between Southwark Bridge Road and Blackman Street, in the Borough; and, in regard to that matter, he might say that the Metropolitan Board were, if possible, in still greater difficulties than they were in respect of the Western improvements, because almost all of the habitations it was proposed to remove were inhabited by artizans, and, he was sorry to say, many of them by the lower class of artizans. The Board were most anxious to carry out that improvement; but the 33rd section of the Act of 1877 was a difficulty in the way of carrying it out, which stared them in the face. They had, therefore, felt it incumbent upon them to postpone the improvements in which this difficulty arose, and to proceed with the other improvements which were pressing upon them, but in regard to which there was not the same difficulty. Out of 12 improvements comprised in the Act of 1877 nine were now entirely completed, and there were only three in which the formation of the streets had not been commenced—namely, the Western improvements and the improvement between Southwark Bridge Road and Blackman Street. The proposal which the Metropolitan Board now made to repeal the 33rd section of the Act of 1877 was opposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow), and he really could not for the life of him make out why his hon. Friend did oppose it, because, if his hon. Friend succeeded in persuading the House of Commons to reject the Bill, what would he do? He would prevent a number of improvements of a most magnificent character, as far as the Metropolis was concerned, from being carried out. But his hon. Friend would do even more than that. He would prevent what he wanted himself—namely, the widening of certain streets. He had no wish to bandy words with the hon. Baronet, and he would, therefore, only say that his hon. Friend was entirely mistaken in the view he took. His hon. Friend had made speeches and published letters on various occasions, and he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) wished to tell his hon. Friend in the most friendly spirit that if he (Sir Sydney Waterlow) thought the Metropolitan Board had not entirely and faithfully fulfilled their duties, the best thing he could do was to go to the Courts of Law and ascertain what their opinion was in the matter. He only made this remark in a friendly spirit, and having made it he would say no more on the subject except this, that one of the great difficulties now experienced in regard to these improvements was that, in 1882, Parliament, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Metropolitan Board, passed a Bill giving the whole, or nearly the whole, of the ground they had authorized the Metropolitan Board to take in connection with the Southwark Bridge Road to the South-Eastern Railway Company. The land reserved for artizans' dwellings in the Southwark Street improvements extended over one and a-half acres of land; but Parliament passed a Bill permitting the Railway Company to take out of this about an acre, leaving the Metropolitan Board with all their liabilities so far as rehousing the labouring classes, who were displaced, was concerned. All they had left to the Metropolitan Board for this purpose was about half-an-acre, and that half-an-acre did not consist of a plot of land altogether, but was cut into little bits. If any hon. Member would take a map in his hand, he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) would defy him to point out how the Metropolitan Board were to discharge their obligations. He believed that he would be able to show in a very few minutes that it was now altogether impossible to house the working classes in the manner the Metropolitan Board intended to have done originally before the Act of 1882 was passed. The Metropolitan Board were taunted with not complying with the spirit of the Act they had thus obtained; but he contended that they were doing more. In the Bill which he asked the House to read a second time they had inserted clauses empowering them to appropriate land purchased elsewhere for the purpose of housing these poor people if they could not do it on their own land; and if the pieces of land left to them were not sufficient for that purpose they were seeking power to place themselves in the hands of the Home Secretary, and whatever the right hon. Gentleman required them to do would be done. All he could say was that hitherto the Metropolitan Board had found the Home Secretary on both sides, whoever he might happen to be, very stringent in these matters, and whatever laws the Home Secretary laid down the Metropolitan Board would do their best to carry out. He only wanted to assure the House that, so far, the Metropolitan Board had done as much and even more than anybody else for the artizan. There was no philanthropic Company in the United Kingdom who had done as much, notwithstanding the great difficulties which had been placed in their way, and he certainly thought those who had interposed the difficulties might have used their talents to a better purpose. But the Metropolitan Board also contemplated another improvement—namely, the acquisition of lands in and near Elm Street in connection with the Gray's Inn Lane improvement, an improvement authorized by the Act of 1877. In regard to that improvement the late Home Secretary made certain recommendations which the Metropolitan Board had entirely adopted, and they wanted now to extend the Gray's Inn Road improvement, and if this Bill passed they would do everything in their power to make a satisfactory extension. He might add that in about a fortnight's time the improvement, so far as it had yet been authorized, could be thrown open to the public; but the Metropolitan Board were anxious to extend it and to make it still more useful. They only asked now for a little delay and for further powers, in order to enable them to do their duty in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. The 42nd clause of the Bill gave the Board power to enlarge and improve Plumstead Common by the addition of certain waste lands in the parish of Plumstead. There were in that House many advocates of open spaces for the enjoyment and recreation of the public, and the only object of this clause was to carry out that object, and by adding a considerable extent of waste land to the existing common to render it more valuable and useful to the people of Plumstead and the public generally. Probably the next improvement in importance to the Western improvements was that which was included in Part V. of the Bill, and which related to the vesting of Hackney Commons in the Metropolitan Board. The Board had experienced the greatest difficulty at Hackney; they had found that there were lammas rights and a variety of other rights, and they had spent a large sum of the public money in endeavouring to make the commons useful and acceptable to the public in spite of certain persons with other rights, which the Board had not been able to prevent them from exercising. What they wanted to do now was to vest the Hackney Commons in the Metropolitan Board, or in somebody else if that Board was destroyed, so that anybody who had a grievance to complain of or a claim to make should be able to go before a properly constituted authority and ask for compensation. It was believed that if a power of this kind were conferred upon an independent Body, in a very short time every grievance would be disposed of, and the common-land would be entirely devoted to the public interest. There was another clause in the Bill—the 43rd—which gave to the Metropolitan Board power to enlarge and improve Hampstead Heath by the addition of certain lands in the parish of St. John, Hampstead. This land was surrounded by land belonging to the Metropolitan Board, or, rather, to the public, and the Board were anxious to be able to purchase it in order that it might be dedicated to the public. He trusted the House would not refuse to give the Metropolitan Board the power they now asked for. He had dealt very shortly and succinctly with the principal provisions of the Bill, and he had very few general observations to make. He hoped the House would not think he had taken up too much of its time in explaining the clauses of the Bill and in asking the House to assent to the second reading of it, so that it might be allowed to go before a Committee in the usual way. As would be seen, it was an omnibus Bill containing various important powers, and he was astonished that his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) should oppose it on account of one single clause which it contained, and which his hon. Friend did not happen to approve of. He could only repeat that his hon. Friend was entirely mistaken in the view he took, and he very much regretted that his hon. Friend should endeavour to destroy the Bill by rejecting it upon the second reading owing to a simple misapprehension. The measure was one of the greatest public importance, and he begged to move that it be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg.*)

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW said, he regretted that he could not agree with the observations of the hon. Baronet who had proposed the second reading of the Bill. No man in that House appreciated the great public usefulness which had resulted from the work his hon. Friend had performed, and the work of the Board over which his hon. Friend presided, more than he did; but he could not forget that the Metropolitan Board, in proposing this Bill, were seeking to override and to set aside the provisions of Public and Private Acts of Parliament which had been passed during the last 20 years, and that they were trying to persuade Parliament to set aside the policy which it had clearly set forth in those Acts—a policy which, he ventured to think, the public, at the present moment, were not prepared to set aside. It was a policy which was clearly set out in the Artizans' Dwellings Act of 1875, and in all the Provisional Orders which had passed the House of Commons under that Act, as well as in all Private Railway Acts which had been passed since that date. That policy clearly declared this—that whenever any public body or private individuals sought to take and destroy houses occupied by the labouring classes they should provide accommodation in lieu of the dwellings so destroyed to the extent, and for the number provided in the provisions of the several Bills. Now, he ventured to think that the public at present were not prepared to reverse that policy. The hon. Baronet had said truly that the Bill was an Omnibus Bill. It consisted of six parts, but he did not intend to trouble the House with any observations except in regard to Parts II. and III. He fully admitted the force of what his hon. Friend had said, that the Bill ought to go before a Committee to have the provisions it contained fairly inquired into; and if the House thought fit, he should be quite prepared to withdraw the Motion of which he had given Notice against the second reading of the Bill, reserving to himself the right of giving a vote in favour of either or both of the other Resolutions which were to be proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), and the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), after the Bill should have been read a second time. By Part II. of the Bill the Metropolitan Board of Works proposed to make two new streets—one in St. Pancras and the other in Poplar. He wished to call attention particularly to the one which was proposed to be made in Poplar. It was to be made upon a site which the Metropolitan Board obtained under a Provisional Order Act in 1879; and his right hon. Friend opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) knew very well that that Provisional Order carried with it, and had incorporated in it, the Artizans' Dwellings Act of 1875. By that Act it was necessary that, unless provision was made for the erection of artizans' dwellings elsewhere, the space when cleared was to be utilized mainly, if not entirely, in that way. Now, this area was nearly four acres in extent. Not 12 months ago—namely, in May, 1883, the Metropolitan Board made a Return, in answer to a Motion by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), which stated that out of an area of 150,000 feet 3,600 were to be devoted to a new street. That was not the new street now asked for; but it was the street included in the Bill of 1879. The Metropolitan Board now only asked for a cross corner of the land, and took a much smaller area, without utilizing the whole plot. Clause 22 of the Bill said—

> "Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may enter upon, take, and use all or any of the lands shown on the deposited plans and described in the deposited book of reference and any easement, right, or privilege in, over, or affecting such lands which they may require for the purposes of or in connection with the improvements, and for providing space for the erection of houses and buildings adjoining or near thereto, and the Board may appropriate for the purposes of the Poplar improvements any lands which they may have acquired under the Metropolis (Little Coram Street, Bloomsbury, Well Street, Poplar, and Great Peter Street, Westminster) Improvements Provisional Orders Confirmation Act, 1879, and thereupon the Board shall, as to such last-mentioned lands, be discharged from any obligation imposed upon them in relation thereto by the last-mentioned Act and the Order thereto confirmed."

It would thus be seen that the Board did not intend to obtain land of equivalent area, or, indeed, to buy land at all. His hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board said they intended to do it; and, if so, why did they not insert a provision to that effect in the Bill?

They were asking Parliament to relieve them of their existing obligations; and he hoped the House, in agreeing to the second reading of the Bill, would take care that they were not relieved unless they made ample provision for rehousing the artizans whom they displaced. He now came to Part III. of the Bill, which consisted of only two clauses, with four or five sub-divisions. By Clause 39—the first clause of Part III.—the Board asked for an extension of two years for the serving of notices for the compulsory purchase of land in connection with the new street proposed to be constructed from Southwark Bridge Road to Great Dover Street, opposite to St. George's Church in the Borough. The Board obtained power to construct that street in 1877, seven years ago, and no doubt public opinion supported them. Parliament sanctioned the formation of the street, knowing that it would pass through one of the most degraded, immoral, and criminal districts to be found in London. Seven years had now expired; but the houses and the district remained exactly as they were; nothing whatever had been done. They had been told, and would probably be told, at still greater length, that the Metropolitan Board could not proceed with its improvement, because, after they obtained authority to carry it out, the South-Eastern Railway Company came to Parliament and obtained permission to make a short line of railway passing over a considerable portion of the land proposed to be taken for the new street, and running, in fact, along one side of the proposed street very nearly throughout the whole of its length. The Bill of the South-Eastern Railway Company went to a Private Bill Committee, where it was carefully examined, and the best surveying evidence brought to bear upon it. The Committee inserted a clause in the Bill which provided that the railway should be constructed on such a level as not to interfere with the making of a new street, and providing, further, that if any differences arose between the Railway Company and the Metropolitan Board they were to be settled by the Board of Trade, with the proviso that no decision of the Board of Trade should be inconsistent with the making of the railway or the making of the new street. It was, therefore, manifest that a Private Bill Committee, after a long and protracted Sitting, came to the conclusion, on the best possible evidence, that the street and the railway might both of them be made in the interests of the people. Then, why did not the Metropolitan Board proceed to make the street? The Bill of the Railway Company was passed in 1882; and now, two years after the decision of the Committee had been given, they asked for two years more to enable them to perform the obligation they had undertaken. This brought him to the 2nd clause of Part III.—namely, Clause 40, to which he hoped the House would listen, because it was an attempt to override Section 33 of the Act of 1877. Clause 40 said—

> "From and after the passing of this Act, Section 33 of the Act of 1877, so far as it imposes obligations upon the Board with respect to providing accommodation for such of the labouring classes as would be displaced by reason of the making of the new street between Southwark Bridge Road and Blackman Street, Borough, by the said Act authorized, shall be and the same is hereby repealed,"

excepting so far as one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State might direct. [Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Hear, hear!] His hon. Friend said "Hear, hear!" and he (Sir Sydney Waterlow) fully endorsed that cry. He wished to make an appeal to his hon. Friend. His hon. Friend was well aware that when the question of the extent to which the Board should be relieved was before Parliament as recently as the year 1882, this very point was discussed in reference to the Artizans' Dwellings Amendment Act of that year, and Parliament declined to assent to the proposal then made that they should be entirely relieved, and decided that the discretion of the Home Secretary should only extend to a number not exceeding one-half of those for whom accommodation was required. No one could doubt that the interests of the labouring classes would be perfectly safe in the hands of the present Home Secretary; but they never knew how long the right hon. and learned Gentleman might retain his Office, and, seeing that Parliament had so recently considered the question, why should the policy and principle of the Act of 1882 bearing upon the subject be now upset? Was it not a much harder case upon the labouring classes than upon the Metropolitan Board? Between the two parties — the Metropolitan Board and the Railway Company, the houses of the labouring classes were to be taken and nothing whatever to be substituted. He contended that that was an intolerable policy and principle, and he asked the House not to allow the Bill to go to a Committee, unless they gave an Instruction to that Committee to see that accommodation was provided for the labouring classes, and that the accommodation which now existed should not be taken away, except to the extent which was assented to in the principle laid down by the Act of 1882. He had now tried, tersely and briefly, and without having any interest in the subject except that of one who had for many years studied this question, to explain the whole case to the House. And, in conclusion, he was fully prepared to withdraw his Motion for the rejection of the Bill; but he would reserve his right to vote for the Instruction to the Committee which the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) had placed upon the Paper.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was glad that the hon. Baronet did not intend to divide the House against the second reading of the Bill, and that he was going to reserve his further action until the Instruction, which was to be moved after the second reading, was brought forward. At the same time, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not think it was altogether desirable that one or two things the hon. Baronet had said should pass entirely without comment. The hon. Baronet said that the Bill involved a reversal of the general policy adopted by Parliament; but he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was of opinion that, on the contrary, it would bring the particular circumstances mentioned in the Bill in accord with the policy of Parliament. It was a matter that was carefully considered by a Committee which sat in 1881 and 1882, and was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). That Committee unanimously recommended a relaxation of the law if it was intended to make it more workable. Therefore this Bill, instead of reversing the policy of Parliament, would bring it into accord with the general law. While reserving any discussion upon the details of the Bill until they came to the Instruction about to be moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) he had considered it desirable to make this statement in answer to the observations of the hon. Baronet who had just spoken.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY, in moving—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class, in connection with any of the schemes included in this Bill."

said, that his remarks would apply to only two parts of the Bill. He was very glad that his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) had not moved the rejection of the Bill, because he thought it desirable that the measure should go to a Committee, where all matters of detail in connection with it might be fairly considered. His remarks applied to the Poplar improvement and the Southwark Bridge Road improvement. So far as the Poplar improvement was concerned, the powers were acquired in 1879; but the Metropolitan Board of Works had only cleared the land within the last 12 months. The land was now cleared, and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, in his speech, assured the House that it was the desire of the Board to rehouse the whole of the 1,030 people who, according to the official figures, had been cleared off from that site. He would only say, in regard to that declaration, that he fully concurred with the remark made by his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend that if the Metropolitan Board had such a wish, why on earth did they not put it in the Bill? In the Bill itself they proposed something quite different. They proposed, in concert with the Local District Board, to run a new street, and they took power in their Bill to take any land they pleased fronting the new street, and to deal with it in the open market, selling it, if they chose, free from all restrictions, for artizans' dwellings. It might be that on this large site they might be able, to the satisfaction of the Home Office and to the satisfaction of the sanitary authorities, to put up dwellings for upwards of 1,000 persons, and, at the same time, to retain a certain amount of reserve frontage for sale in the open market in connection with the new street. If that were so the law would allow them to do it, and his Instruction would not prevent them. All his Instruction asked was that the Metropolitan Board of Works should be bound to do that which the law now said they should do, and which the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board said they were willing to do—namely, to rehouse the whole of the 1,030 people who would be displaced in consequence of carrying out this street improvement. He now passed on to the other scheme, the Southwark Bridge Road improvement. The Southwark Bridge Road improvement was before Parliament in 1877. In that year the Metropolitan Board of Works obtained power to make this street improvement with an obligation to rehouse the people they displaced. He thought it was rather singular that, although so many years had elapsed, nothing as yet had been done. The action of the Railway Company was now alleged as the excuse for not carrying out the provisions of the Act; but the Railway Company only obtained their powers in 1882, five years after the Metropolitan Board of Works got theirs. Surely five years were time enough, and more than enough, to enable the Board to set to work in making this new street, and erecting the buildings in which the working people were to be rehoused. To judge from the language of the hon. Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), the Metropolitan Board of Works only considered a scheme complete when all the houses were pulled down and all the people thrown into the streets. That was the hon. Member's idea of a complete scheme. He would only tell the House, in regard to two of the schemes to which the term "complete" had been applied—namely, the widening of Great College Street and clearances in the City and in Whitechapel, that all of the houses had been pulled down, and in each case only one of them had been rebuilt, that one being a public-house. They had been told that the Metropolitan Board of Works went before the Committee which sat in 1882, and was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and that they asked for a certain amount of relief with respect to these restrictions. In this particular case of the Southwark Bridge Road improvements they made no application. Indeed, they had applied for relief from Parliament on only three points; first of all, in regard to the West End improvements, in which some relief was recommended, which relief, however, when tested by another Committee, was countermanded to a certain extent; they also obtained relief in the case of the Gray's Inn Lane improvement; and, with reference to the Southwark Bridge Road improvements, what was it that the Metropolitan Board asked for? Through their Surveyor, Mr. Goddard, when their application came before Parliament, they said they were ready and willing to rehouse every one of the 1,600 people who were displaced by the carrying out of that improvement, and all they asked for was permission to build blocks upon the land, which was cleared, devoting the ground floor of the new dwellings to the use of shopkeepers, and taking one or two plots at the back of the square for dwellings for the artizan classes. Having so arranged and obtained that power, they could not come to Parliament and ask not only that what they did not ask for in 1882 should be granted, but what Parliament had deliberately refused to grant in connection with the Artizans' Dwellings Act Amendment Bill. As a matter of fact, what they requested Parliament to concede to them now was liberty to rehouse the displaced artizans or not, as they pleased, at the discretion of the Home Secretary. The Metropolitan Board had been very careful, in their contest with the Railway Company, to obtain clauses for their own protection; but they did not appear to have thought it worth while to obtain clauses for the protection of those whom they were specially bound to protect—namely, the artizans whom they and the Railway Company were proposing to displace, and whom it was their duty to rehouse. It might be said that the Railway Company would have the same obligation as the Metropolitan Board were under to rehouse the poor; but if this Instruction were agreed to, both the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Railway Company would be absolutely protected from any injustice. What was the clause of the Act of 1877 of which the Board complained so much? That clause only provided that when the Metropolitan Board of Works themselves served the notices, and proceeded to take the houses, they should satisfy the Home Secretary that they had provided equivalent accommodation for the persons who were settled on the land at the time of the passing of the Act of 1877. What they now said was, that the Railway Company were going to take these houses; but if the Railway Company served the notices and took the land, then the Metropolitan Board of Works would not be bound either to serve notices or to rehouse the poor who were displaced; and, therefore, the making of this railway could in no way impose any liability upon the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board told the House that the area in this clause was only one and a-quarter acres; but it was considerably more. The hon. Member said the railway proposed to take one acre, and the houses situated upon the area. If that were so, the Metropolitan Board would be free from any obligations to rehouse the people who would be displaced from the ground. As to the question of responsibility, the Metropolitan Board were amply protected by the law as it stood, because they had taken care to secure the insertion of a clause in the South-Eastern Railway Act by which it was provided that if either party gave the notices, or in any other way dealt with the land, in the event of any difference arising, the whole question should be decided by the Board of Trade after hearing both parties. Therefore, the Metropolitan Board would be amply protected against any responsibility they might incur in regard to serving the notices for carrying out the provisions of the Act. There was, therefore, no reason why the House should not agree to this Instruction. The Metropolitan Board asked in this Bill to be absolutely relieved from any obligation to rehouse the poor.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: No, no.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, "Yes." As far as the law went, the Board only asked that they should be left to negotiate with unfettered discretion.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: No.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, the Metropolitan Board proposed that they should be left to settle the matter with the Home Secretary. Now, as far as the South-Eastern Railway Company were concerned, it was very likely that they would never make this railway at all. They had had their powers for two years, and, as far as he could learn, the whole matter was flagging very much, and no steps had yet been taken to make the railway. If the powers of the South-Eastern Railway Company were to expire, what would be the result? The Railway Company would be relieved of their obligations altogether, and if the present Bill were passed, without the Instruction he suggested, the Metropolitan Board would step in; and if they could only persuade the present, or any future Home Secretary, they would be able to use this land as a source of profit to themselves; and while making this street improvement as cheaply as possible, they would get rid of their liability to rehouse the poor already imposed upon them by Parliament. He might have shown that there were other instances, but he was unwilling to delay the House. He trusted the House would consent to the proposed Instruction, which would not interfere with the reasonable discretion imposed by Parliament on the Home Secretary, and which would impose no liabilities on the Metropolitan Board which they ought not fairly to bear, and which were perfectly compatible with the proper improvement of the Metropolis. He begged to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class, in connection with any of the schemes included in this Bill."—(*Mr. Lyulph Stanley.*)

MR. HIBBERT said, he was sorry that he felt compelled to oppose his hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) in what he now proposed to the House; but he did so because he was of opinion that if this proposal were carried it would be exceedingly unfair to the Metropolitan Board of Works. He thought the House would concur with him in that view, and, in a few words, he would explain how the matter stood. The Metropolitan Board of Works were compelled, under the 33rd clause of the Metropolitan Streets Improvements Act, to provide in this particular place certain accommodation for the poor displaced by the improvement. It might be asked why the Metropolitan Board of Works had not carried out the improvement they were authorized to make? In justice to the Board it ought to be stated that since the Act passed the South-Eastern Railway Company had interfered with the proposal by obtaining a Bill empowering them to make a railway through a portion of the property in question. The 33rd section of the Act had also been found to be unworkable, and he thought he should be borne out in that view by his right hon. Friend opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), whose Committee considered the question a few years ago, and found that section to be unworkable. There had been two Acts of Parliament passed since which referred to two different portions of the scheme under the Metropolitan Streets Improvements Act, and which gave relaxation from the conditions originally laid down. Not only had that been done, but the Committee to which he had alluded actually passed a Resolution in favour of relaxation in any future schemes that might be brought before Parliament. Therefore, the Metropolitan Board were not, in regard to these improvement schemes, to be held bound, by the total number of persons displaced, to provide compensation; but they were virtually placed in a different position by the relaxation which had been given by Parliament in reference to the two schemes already considered and sanctioned. On this ground they could hardly, therefore, place the Metropolitan Board of Works in a position of such unfairness as that proposed by the present Instruction. The Metropolitan Board proposed to leave the decision of the matter to the Secretary of State, and he thought they might rely upon the Secretary of State not to go beyond the intentions of Parliament. The Report of the Committee recommended that, at least, not more than one-third of the persons displaced should be accommodated, and, supposing the Bill of the Metropolitan Board were passed by Parliament, the Home Secretary would be guided very much by the recommendation of that Committee in considering what provision should be made. It seemed to him, therefore, that it was unfair to call upon the Board of Works to carry out the conditions imposed upon them by their original Act, and he was quite certain that the House would not agree to the Instruction which had been proposed by his hon. Friend and Colleague. He was also anxious to say that while he viewed the present proposal in that light he was not disposed to say that the Metropolitan Board of Works had in every instance done what was desirable and proper. He thought it would be found that there were some cases in which the Metropolitan Board had not discharged what was their real duty. That, however, was not the case in the present instance, and he believed that in regard to the Southwark Bridge Road scheme the Metropolitan Board intended to carry out, as far as they could, the intentions of Parliament in the way of providing accommodation for the artizans and labourers whom they displaced. Before he sat down he wished to say that the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Home Office, with respect to the delay which had taken place in carrying out this particular scheme, had been very much hampered in their operations by the Company over which his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) presided, and which was established for the benefit of the working classes. The delay had arisen in consequence of the fact that the plans of that Company, which had been submitted to the Home Secretary, had not been considered satisfactory. The Company proposed the erection of houses of six or seven stories, whereas the Home Office were of opinion that there ought not to be more than four or five stories. That had caused the whole of the delay in this particular instance. Therefore, upon these grounds, and upon other grounds, he thought the House ought not to assent to the Instruction which had been moved. The Select Committee, on the general question, recommended that accommodation should be provided for the housing of at least one-third of the displaced population, and that the provision for the remainder should be at the discretion of the Home Secretary.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there was one question which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down would probably be able to answer. His (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) impression, in regard to the Report made by the Committee, was that in all cases that occurred in London the Committee recommended that the amount of accommodation to be provided for the poorer classes, who were to be displaced, should extend to one-half, and it might amount to more than that, if the Secretary of State thought, on full consideration of the facts laid before him, that more than one-half was necessary for the accommodation of the persons displaced. As far as he read the present Bill, it did not contain those important words "not less than one-half." That was a very important fact, and although it was quite true that the Secretary of State might refer to the Reports of the Committee, and to other cases under other Acts of Parliament, and especially to the General Public Act, yet, on the other hand, he might not do so, and that was a point which ought not to be lost sight of. He understood, from the assent which had been given to his statement by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that it was actually the case that the Report of the Committee recommended a provision to be made for one-half of those displaced, at all events. In that case he would ask his hon. and gallant Friend behind him (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) whether he would be content if the Bill were allowed to go to a Committee, and that those words should be inserted in it in Committee; because he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought the House was bound to insist upon their insertion. The Bill proposed to carry out the Report of the Committee. But the Committee said—"At all events, there must be provision made for one-half of the persons whom the Bill turns out." Would his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board assent to the insertion of those words in the Bill when it got into Committee? If he did so, then, of course, the Report of the Committee would be carried out; but, if not, the matter would be left entirely to the discretion of the Secretary of State, and that was not what the Committee had recommended.

MR. RITCHIE said, there was something very much stronger than even the Report of the Committee, and that was an Act of Parliament. An Act had been passed after the Committee made this Report; and, if he remembered rightly, an attempt was made at the time of the passing of that Act to give the Secretary of State entire discretion as to the number of people to be rehoused; but Parliament would not consent, and limited the power of the Secretary of State to one-half. As a general principle, he strongly objected to the repeal of Public Acts of Parliament by Private Acts; but when it came to an Act of Parliament passed so recently as the year 1882, his objections were magnified ten-fold. It must also be remembered that the question of the housing of the poor was one in which the whole community was deeply interested. He understood the Instruction now proposed, if carried, would be an Instruction to the Committee on the Bill to insert in it words which would limit the power and the discretion of the Home Secretary in the same way as the Act of 1882. [Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW: No.] He understood that was the intention of his hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley); and he would point out to his hon. Friend, in order to make it clear, the advisability of omitting from the Instruction the words "in connection with any of the schemes included in this Bill." The Instruction would then read—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class."

If the words he suggested were omitted there could be no doubt as to the object of the Instruction; but otherwise it might be contended that the intention of the Instruction was that the accommodation to be provided was that specified in the original scheme.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he had no objection to accept the alteration suggested.

MR. RITCHIE said, he thought the House would be most ill-advised if they did away with the protection now afforded by an Act of Parliament and substituted a discretionary power in the hands of the Home Secretary, which had been so expressly limited by the Act of 1882. He would, therefore, move, as an Amendment, that all the words after the word "class" to the end of the Instruction be omitted.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, it was suggested to him that instead of the words "now required by law" the words "now required by the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, 1882," should be substituted. He should be quite willing to accept that Amendment, Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman withdraw the Motion he has already made?

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question is that the Motion be, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE remarked that before the Motion was withdrawn he wished to say that he entirely agreed with everything that had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South - West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). The discussion which had been going on for the last minute or two, and which had been raised by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), had brought out the fact that his hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) had no intention of maintaining the obligation upon the Metropolitan Board created by a former Act, but only that part of the obligation which was imposed upon them by the Act of 1882. They were all agreed that that obligation ought to be maintained, and all they had to settle was the right form of words in which to carry out the intentions of the House. He was not quite sure whether the form in which it was proposed to move the Instruction would meet the necessities of the case—namely—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution of the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class."

He thought it would be better to point in some more direct way to the Act of 1882.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would suggest that the Motion should take the form of an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution of the accommodation provided by the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, 1882, for persons of the labouring class.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY said, he was quite willing to move an Instruction to that effect.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required to be provided for persons of the labouring class by 'The Artizans' Dwellings Act, 1882.'"—(*Mr. Lyulph Stanley.*)

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he was very anxious to meet the wishes of the House as far as possible. All that he could say was that he was placed in a very difficult position. The Railway Company had taken away from them two-thirds of the land over which the Metropolitan Board originally acquired powers; and how on earth the artizans, who ought to be put upon an acre and three-quarters, were to be housed upon three-quarters of an acre he really did not know. He, therefore, must enter his protest against the action of the House. At the same time, he had no intention of dividing the House against the Motion; he would only enter a protest, and he certainly did not think that what the House was ordering could possibly be carried out. If it could, all he would say was that the Metropolitan Board and himself would do all in their power to comply with the wishes of the House. They could not, however, do impossibilities, or cram a quart bottle into a pint pot, however much they might wish to do so.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW said, he was glad he had not divided the House against the second reading of the Bill, as the object he had in placing his Motion upon the Paper was now practically accomplished. He should like to say one word in answer to the statement just made by his hon. Friend the Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), who said the Metropolitan Board would not be able to comply with the wishes of the House. His hon. Friend seemed to forget that, under the Act of 1882, the Board had power to appropriate any land they thought was suitable for housing the labouring class, and the Home Secretary could approve of the appropriation of such land if he thought it would answer the purpose as well. Therefore, the House, in imposing upon the Metropolitan Board the obligation of the Act of 1882, were really doing that which was very easy for the Metropolitan Board of Works to carry out.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required to be provided for persons of the labouring class by "The Artizans' Dwellings Act, 1882."

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, the Instruction which he wished that the House should give to the Committee, after the second reading of the Bill, was modest and narrow. It referred to only one part of the project which the Board of Works, acting through his hon. Friend opposite (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), sought to secure with the approval of the House. It was not, however, so trivial as the hon. Gentleman suggested. Unless he had heard the hon. Gentleman wrongly, he had said in his opening remarks that the area of the Mint, in Southwark, was about an acre; but the Schedule of his Bill made its extent five acres. Which was right, the Chairman of the Board of Works, or the Bill before the House? Again, he entirely sympathized with the Board of Works in their difficulties. They had had—they told the House—to join prices for the sites which they were constrained to purchase, which were often three times as much as they could secure from purchasers under the clauses of the Act of which the late Home Secretary was the reputed author; although the right hon. Gentleman had lately told them in the public prints that the unofficial Home Secretary in this most unfortunate business was the late Mr. Cawley, sometime Member for Salford, who guided the hand of the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and so inflicted the heavy loss on the London ratepayers. Considering, therefore, the enormous costs which the law put upon occupiers in London, he did not wonder that the Board of Works hesitated before it incurred these charges. But the case of the Mint, the five acres of the Schedule, was peculiar. It was almost the worst district in London. It was a slum in which the lowest thieves and prostitutes congregated. It was unsafe for any respectable person to enter it by day or night, except under the protection of the police; and it ought to have been long since swept away. Nearly seven years ago the Board of Works took powers under an Act to purify this stew, and now they wished to postpone the operation; while he, by the Instruction which he proposed, wished to hasten the process by which this vile den, lying close to some of our most important thoroughfares, should be and would be transformed. He considered it to be his duty to find out the facts. He might say that two gentlemen of great practical good sense and benevolence, Mr. Hawkins of the London School Board, and Mr. Berry, a resident in St. George's parish, aided by the efforts of his hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Cohen) had done what they could for this miserable place. He had received a very important letter from a person on whom he could fully rely, and from which he would, with the permission of the House, read an extract. The writer was under an impression that the Board of Works might want time, being ignorant of the fact that the Board could give notices easily before the time prescribed in their present Act elapsed, and take three years before they finally completed the operation. The writer of the letter—Mr. Oliver—said—

> "There is considerable indignation at the long delay, especially among the ratepayers of St. George's, in which it (the district) is situated, a very large sum being lost annually by the unoccupied land. Again, there is another serious matter worth mentioning, if you have a chance to speak on the matter. A large sewer has been commenced, and has been awaiting completion nearly two years in consequence of this delay in making the street. It is finished on the Bermondsey side to St. George's Church, and on the St. Saviour's side to Mint Street, and complaint is being made by the inhabitants of the smell from it."

The remainder of the letter was full of practical suggestions, in which the large discretion granted to the Board of Works was contrasted with the very limited discretion granted to the School Board. Now, he (Mr. Thorold Rogers) wished that the Board of Works should be constrained to commence this work before August by giving the notices. The place was a disgrace to London, to the Board of Works, to decency itself, and no one knew this better than the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg). He could find only one explanation for the delay. Two years ago the South-Eastern Railway obtained powers for constructing a railway over this site, the Committee taking care that their powers should not conflict with the duties of the Board of Works under the Act which the House was asked to amend, as to the condition of time which they were invited to prolong. The South-Eastern Railway was presided over by an exceedingly acute gentleman, who wanted to purchase the land when cleared, and the Board of Works wanted the railway to take it uncleared; and during this contest of rights a vile, loathsome, and dangerous nuisance was continued, and, at the instance of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, was to be prolonged. He did not think that such a delay was in the interests of his constituency, of the Metropolis, or of the public at large, or in that of public decency; and he, therefore, begged to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to extend the time for taking the land which is necessary for the formation of the New Street from Southwark Bridge Road to Great Dover Street."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he was sorry that it was necessary for him again to trouble the House. All he would say was, that as the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) expressed such great sympathy with him, he hoped he would prove it by withdrawing the Motion, and not troubling the House with a Division upon it; because, if he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) got half-a-dozen Members to support him, he should certainly vote against it, as the Instruction proposed was altogether impracticable. He had thought that the hon. Member for Southwark knew everything; but it was now quite clear that there was one thing he knew nothing about, and that was the serving of notices, and the difficulties involved in freehold, leasehold, and copyhold property. If the hon. Member had had as much to do with such matters as he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) had, he would not have risen in that House to deliver the speech he had just made. He (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) would certainly ask the House to follow him into the Lobby; because, if this Instruction were given to the Committee, the improvements to which it related would never be carried out at all; and he thought that the Instruction already given to the Committee was quite sufficient to hamper and embarrass the action of the Metropolitan Board. He would not take up the time of the House any longer; but he certainly gave the most strenuous opposition to the Instruction, and he asked the House to reject it.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he had risen simply to say, on the part of the Government, that if his hon. Friend the Member for Southwark went to a Division they would feel called upon to oppose him. The Instruction would impose great difficulties upon the obligations of the Metropolitan Board of Works in connection with this scheme; and he thought it would be better to leave them unfettered in the discharge of their duties. The proposal contained in the Bill was that there should be an extension of time for the completion of these improvements for two years; and those who opposed the extension could appear before the Committee, and use their best efforts to shorten that period. Upon these grounds, he should certainly vote against the Instruction.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had no wish to detain the House for more than a minute; but this was a matter which came before the Committee over which he had the honour to preside, and they went carefully into it. He was bound to say that he thought it would be a great hardship upon the Metropolitan Board of Works if this Instruction were to be sent up to the Committee. He knew that the Metropolitan Board had great difficulty in carrying out the obligations which Parliament had already imposed upon them; and he hoped the House would not consent to any steps that might further impede or embarrass them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member for Southwark press the Instruction?

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS: No, Sir.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Leave to Committee to make a Special Report.

Special Report *brought up*, and read.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Agnew, General Alexander, Mr. Armitstead, Mr. Arthur Arnold, The Lord Advocate, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir Arthur Bass, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Bulwer, Mr. Burt, Sir George Campbell, Lord Edward Cavendish, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Chaplin, Sir Edward Colebrooke, Mr. Cotton, Sir Richard Cross, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Ewart, Mr. John Fitzwilliam, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Gibson, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. William Henry Gladstone, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Macnaghten, Mr. Marriott, Mr. Monk, Mr. Arnold Morley, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Richard Paget, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Pell, Mr. Pemberton, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Roundell, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Villiers Stuart, Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Mr. Walter, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, and Mr. Percy Wyndham.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported* from the said Committee, That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Anderson, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Thomas Baring, Mr. Barran, Mr. Birkbeck, Mr. Rowland Blennerhassett, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Maurice Brooks, Mr. Alexander Brown, Mr. Thomas Bruce, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Caine, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Edward Clarke, Mr. Coope, Mr. James Corry, Mr. Cowen, Sir Robert Cunliffe, Sir Donald Currie, Mr. Dalrymple, Mr. Richard Davies, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Ecroyd, Mr. Algernon Egerton, Sir George Elliot, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Jackson, Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Edward Leatham, Mr. William Lawrence, Mr. Henry Lee, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. MacIver, Sir William M'Arthur, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Marum, Sir Charles Mills, Mr. Mulholland, Mr. Henry Northcote, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Arthur Pease, Sir Henry Peek, Earl Percy, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Clare Read, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Edward Stanhope, Marquess of Tavistock, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Williamson, and Mr. Wills.

Report to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—PROMOTION OF OFFICERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Was one of the ride officers recently specially promoted over the heads of others in the Inland Revenue Department, the son of a collector in that branch; what are the subjects of the test examination that ride officers have to pass on promotion to divisions; is it laid down in 7 and 8 Geo. 4, c. 53, s. 4, that the efficient and well-conducted officers can be deprived of their right to promotion in the ordinary course; and, what proof has the Board that the officers passed over do not possess equal or superior merit to those promoted?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, no collector's son has recently been specially promoted. The test examination referred to is a careful scrutiny of the candidate's official books for three months by examiners of the head office, in order to see whether they have conducted their duties properly and systematically. No one in the Civil Service can claim promotion as a right; and there is, therefore, no question of depriving these men of what does not exist. As it is open to Collectors and Inspectors in every part of the Kingdom to recommend officers for special promotion, it must fairly be believed that those selected are superior in merits to those not so. With reference to a previous Question of the hon. Member, I may add that religion and politics are absolutely disregarded by the Board, and they do their best to see the recommendations of the Collectors are not biassed by such considerations.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURTS—DECISIONS GIVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that in the case of Thomas Parker, tenant, Cornelius O'Brien, landlord, Messrs. Griffin and Walpole on the 2nd of April 1883, in the absence of the legal Sub-Commissioner, decided a question of law as to the effect of a sheriff's sale, and dismissed the originating notice; that on the 31st January 1884 the case was taken before the Recorder of Cork, who refused a dismiss on the same question of law; whether the Land Commission will instruct non-legal Sub-Commissioners to refrain from deciding legal questions when they sit alone; and, if he would inquire what explanation Messrs. Griffin and Walpole have to offer?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commissioners inform me that during the absence through illness of the legal Assistant Commissioner, the instructions to the lay Sub-Commissioners were to comply with any application made either by the landlord or the tenant for the postponement of a case for the attendance of the legal Sub-Commissioner. These instructions were complied with; but no application for adjournment appears to have been made in the case of "Parker *v.* O'Brien." With regard to the case before the Recorder of Cork, the Land Commissioners inform me that they know nothing about it. They had tried to obtain information, but had failed.

Mr. HEALY wished to know whether it was not the fact that the lay Sub-Commissioners dismissed the case upon a legal point?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The instructions are that the non-legal Sub-Commissioners are to adjourn if either party in the suit requests them to do so.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURTS —IRISH-SPEAKING WITNESSES.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in re Mary Staunton, tenant, Rev. Dr. Collis, landlord, the tenant, an Irish-speaking witness, because she declined to speak English, saying she could not, and then having spoken a few words in that language, had her case dismissed, in Fermoy, last July, by Mr. M'Devitts, Sub-Commissioner; that she has had to file a second originating notice; that this has not since been heard; that other tenants on the same estate got large abatements; that this woman is still paying the old rent; whether it is the practice of the Sub-Commissions to insist on making persons who only know a few words of English to attempt to give their evidence in that language; and, whether their attention will be called to the fact that an acquaintance with a few words of English does not justify this practice when important interests are involved, and the distinction of shades of meaning in words and phrases may make all the difference in evidence?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commissioners inform me that they have ascertained upon inquiry that the case in question was dismissed by the Sub-Commission on the ground that the tenant, Mary Staunton, deliberately "attempted to deceive the Court."

Mr. HEALY: On what point?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That is what I am informed by the Land Commissioners. With regard to witnesses who do not understand or speak English, the practice in all the Courts of the Land Commission is to employ an interpreter, and this course is also adopted when a witness's knowledge of English is imperfect.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the allegation that the woman Staunton attempted to deceive the Court related to her having spoken a few words of English after she had stated she could speak only Irish?

[No reply was given.]

Mr. HEALY said that he should repeat the Question on Monday.

Mr. DAWSON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that, owing to Irish-speaking people not having been properly taught English in the National schools through the medium of their own tongue, it might be supposed they were deceiving, when in reality they did not properly understand English?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that his attention had been drawn to that matter in a long and interesting Correspondence with Sir Patrick Keenan, which had just been laid upon the Table of the House.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—THREATENING LETTERS.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that a naval pensioner named Thomas Walsh, postmaster at Castletownshend, county Cork, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, under the Crimes Act, at Skibbereen, for writing a threatening letter, and that this sentence was confirmed, on appeal, by the county court judge; that a memorial, signed by the district magistrates, was presented, through Judge Townshend, to the Lord Lieutenant, in favour of the prisoner; that Walsh was thereupon liberated, after being a few days in gaol; that, although he was temporarily deprived of his office of postmaster, he was restored to it shortly after his release; whether any precedent exists for the Lord Lieutenant remitting a sentence passed under the Crimes Act, and confirmed, on appeal, by the county court judge; if he could state on what grounds did His Excellency pardon Walsh; how long was he in gaol; is it the fact that, in 1881-2, persons in the Postal Service arrested on mere suspicion, under the Coercion Act, were refused reinstatement upon release; and, if he will inquire of the postal authorities upon what principle Walsh was restored to the Service, after conviction?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the facts are as stated in the first paragraph of this Question, except that the memorial on behalf of Walsh was not forwarded by Judge Townshend, and that it was not the Lord Lieutenant; but the Lords Justices, acting in His Excellency's absence, who reduced the sentence. Very few cases under the Crimes Act, confirmed on appeal, have come before His Excellency by memorial—I believe only three in all. In one of those the appeal was not proceeded with, and the County Court Judge affirmed the sentence, which was afterwards reduced by His Excellency, the prisoner being released on bail after he had suffered one month out of a sentence of four months. Walsh was in custody from the 20th of October to the 3rd of November. He was released by the Lords Justices, after a most careful consideration of all the circumstances of the case, because they considered it a proper one in which to exercise the Prerogative of the Crown. I cannot undertake to answer Questions relating to the action of the Post Office Department.

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—ABERYSTWITH COLLEGE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Vice President of the Council, If the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales recommended that the College at Aberystwith, whether retained on its present site or removed to Carnarvon or Bangor, must be accepted as the College for North Wales; whether the Government intends to accept and act upon the recommendation of the Committee; and, whether, in the event of the College not being removed, it is the intention of the Government to continue the grant now temporarily paid to it?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, we have carried out the recommendations of the Departmental Committee by the establishment of Colleges at Bangor and Cardiff, in conformity with the wishes of the inhabitants of North and South Wales. The continuance of a grant to Aberystwith is a question which is shortly to be brought under the notice of this House and of the Government; and it would be premature at this moment, before the advocates of Aberystwith have been heard, to express any opinion on the subject.

PRISON REGULATIONS—RELEASE OF DYING PRISONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the practice existing in English prisons as to the release of dying prisoners upon application, and the surrender of the bodies of such as die in prison to their friends; why a different practice is followed in Ireland; whether it is the fact that the governor of Mountjoy Prison, before the death of Michael Waters, telegraphed to his uncle that the young man was dying; if he could explain why was Waters not released; whether it is the case that an application for his release was made by a local clergyman; why the body was not surrendered for burial to his relatives; by what right the Crown claim control of the bodies of convicts not sentenced to death; whether he can show any authority for the assumption that a sentence of imprisonment involves the detainer of the corpse of the prisoner, and its burial within prison precincts; if it is the fact that the burial of Waters was subsequently conducted by Government officials in Glasnevin Cemetery; on what grounds were his relatives denied the consolation of attending his burial; and, if he will state whether any prison regulations exist as to dying prisoners, or as to the disposition of their bodies after death; and, if not, on what authority the governor of Mountjoy acted?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, if there is any material difference between the English and Irish practice, it will, no doubt, be dealt with in the Report of the Royal Commission, to whom the question of differences of system was a special matter of reference in their warrant. With regard to the case of Michael Waters, the Governor did telegraph to his uncle as to his dangerous condition. It is true, also, that an application for his release was made by a local clergyman; but the medical officer could not recommend compliance with this application, as he did not consider the prisoner to be in a fit condition to be removed. With regard to the disposal of the remains of deceased prisoners, it seems to be a matter of long-established practice. The custom has been, to give up, if desired, the bodies of prisoners dying in local prisons; but not the bodies of prisoners dying in convict prisons. In the case of a felon under sentence of penal servitude, the Crown has complete power to prevent the removal of the body from the prison; and in the case of Waters there were special reasons why the Government considered it right that no exception to the usual practice should be made, and the Governor was instructed accordingly. The burial was accordingly conducted in the usual manner in a Roman Catholic Cemetery, the deceased having been of that persuasion. The Deputy Governor of the prison was present. It is not true that any of the deceased's relatives were denied permission to attend. His uncle was the only one who asked to be allowed to attend, and his request was complied with.

Mr. HEALY inquired where the Government got power to claim control over the bodies of deceased convicts—in the Common or Statute Law?

Mr. TREVELYAN replied, that he had stated it on the highest legal authority in Ireland, whom he had specially consulted.

Mr. HEALY: Will the highest legal authority from Ireland in this House say under what Statute the Government claims control over the corpses of convicts? ["No, no!"]

Mr. HEALY: I shall put the Question on the Notice Paper.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) —"LUMPING" OR BRACKETING.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, as Chairman of the Local Government Board, it has come to his knowledge that a large number of voters in the county of Wicklow are deprived of their votes by the process known as "lumping" or "bracketing;" and, whether, if supplied with a list of cases, he will cause an inquiry to be made in regard to the action of the revising valuers and clerks of union in the matter? He wished also to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that in Ireland persons of known National politics who are entitled to be on the Register of Voters have lost their right to vote, either by refusal of the revising valuer to revise the valuation and register their holdings separately or by the reduction of the valuation a few shillings below the qualifying amount; whether he is aware that at the late revision sessions at Rathdrum, Denis Byrne and Joseph Keenan lost their votes by being bracketed in the rate book, the revising valuer when called on to unbracket them saying—

> "He could not effect the object in view without taking his chain out to measure the old bounds;"

whether the revising barrister is reported to have commented severely on the conduct of the revising valuer, stating that he was paid for performing the duty and should have done it; whether he has seen the following extract from the Report of the proceedings of the Rathdrum Board of Guardians on the 5th December last:—

> "Mr. John Byrne, of Cloneen, submitted the rate book to the Chairman, and said, before the Board adjourned he would wish to point out to him a mistake thereon. Some short time ago he (Mr. Byrne) had occasion to refer to the valuation book of the Union, and, in doing so, he was astounded to find that the name of his brother, Mr. Michael Byrne, P.L.G. Cronawinna (who was now present) had his area bracketed in on the book with two other parties, although his rating was separate. The area of a neighbour, Mr. Just, was similarly bracketed in with other men's holdings. Neither of these men

(and several others whose areas were also lumped on the rate books) had anything whatsoever to do with anyone else's holding, their farms being clear and distinct, and in no way held jointly with any other person. . . . Several parties had been disfranchised at the late Revision Sessions by Dr. Darley, on account of their areas being grouped on the books this way. If his brother had been objected to, or Mr. Just, their votes and those of the persons with whom they were bracketed would have been broken; the Chairman said it was manifestly unfair to deprive persons of their votes for such a cause; the Clerk said the only remedy was to see that the revising valuer, when he came round, made the necessary changes;"

whether he is aware that Mr. Ball Greene, the head of the Valuation Office in Ireland, has stated he had no knowledge of the complaints made against the revising valuers; and, whether, if a list of cases is submitted to him, he will cause an extra departmental inquiry to be made into the allegations?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, my right hon. Friend has asked me to deal with this Question, as I have already been in correspondence with the hon. Member upon it. As regards the alleged "lumping," I have to say that in no case has any alteration of this nature been made in the valuation books for over 30 years; in fact, there is no legal power to do so. The whole difficulty has arisen from a decision of a Revising Barrister, which I have heard of with surprise; and I cannot ascertain how far it has been made the subject of appeal. In each of these three cases referred to in the Question the valuations are now exactly the same as they were 30 years ago. There is no power to revise in such cases except upon the evidence of the Ordnance Maps. But, as it may be possible in some cases to separate the holdings, a special inquiry will be made in the favourable summer weather, with the view of dividing them wherever the maps give sufficient detail. As regards the alleged reduction below the qualifying amount, there is here, again, a misapprehension of the powers and duties of the Valuation Office. No change in a valuation can be made except upon the initiative of the local authorities, and then only where there have been changes in the holding or in the buildings upon it. Only two cases are known to have arisen at the last revision where premises ceased to confer the franchise in this way, and in each of them the occupier had a qualification elsewhere in the county. We are most anxious that everyone really qualified to vote should be able to do so, and if the hon. Member knows of any cases where votes have been lost through difficulties in the valuation, my right hon. Friend and I will give them our best personal consideration; but we must altogether repudiate the suggestion of partizan motives conveyed in the Question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-WORKING—BRADFORD BOARD SCHOOL.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to a Memorial addressed to the School Board at Bradford, signed by over fifty medical men of that town, in which they pray the Board to direct that home lessons shall not be enforced on children under ten years of age; and, whether he proposes to take any steps to limit pressure upon children of tender age in this direction?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, I have seen the Memorial in question, and I have read some of the statements made on its presentation as to the prevalence of brain disease among children. I find, however, that these statements are not corroborated by the Registrar General's Returns. I have every confidence that the Bradford School Board—which is an exceptionally able one—will exercise wisdom and discretion in dealing with the subject of over-pressure. In the Code which I have laid on the Table, it will be found that we have taken special precautions to prevent children being over-worked in schools—first, by directing that exceptionally dull children, or children who are weakly in body or delicate in health, or who have suffered from prolonged illness, shall be withheld from examination; secondly, by making it incumbent on managers that during the year prior to examination such children shall not be unduly pressed; thirdly, by enabling children who have failed in two subjects, or twice in one subject, to be re-examined in the same Standard. We shall also direct Her Majesty's Inspectors to see that these rules are carried into effect. But we are of opinion that no regulations which we could lay down would be effectual unless parents, teachers, and managers co-operate with the Department to protect the children.

There are nearly 5,000,000 of children on the rolls of public elementary schools in Great Britain, and it is impossible for a central Department to lay down hard-and-fast rules for the guidance of local authorities as to the due amount of instruction that may be given with safety to every child.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether the statement made by Dr. Alexander in bringing the Memorial before the Bradford School Board was untrue? The statement being that within the last three weeks he had seen no less than three cases of brain disease, one fatal, brought on by over-work in schools.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he did not know anything about Dr. Alexander's statement. What he had himself said was, that the statements as to the prevalence of brain disease during the last 15 years were not corroborated by the Registrar General's Returns.

Mr. J. LOWTHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would make special inquiry into the serious allegations contained in the Report of Dr. Alexander?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that whenever a case came before him he had ordered special inquiries to be made; but he could not undertake to inquire into the statements made by Dr. Alexander where the cases were not specified.

Mr. J. LOWTHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would not inquire what the specific cases were?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that he could not undertake to do so.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the Report of the Government Inspector on the case of Emma Rowley, a scholar in the British School at Cheltenham, who died of inflammation of the brain, confirms the evidence of Dr. Moseley, given at the coroner's inquest—

> "That the lessons which the deceased had to learn at school, coupled with the time devoted to study, was too great a mental strain for any healthy child of seven or eight years to bear, and, looking at the state of the deceased, the strain was much more severe. That he thought the mental strain she had to bear most certainly hastened her death;"

and, whether it is true that the coroner, in his charge to the jury, declared—

> "That the evidence went far to confirm the growing feeling amongst the public that children were too severely taxed as far as their education was concerned?"

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, we have received the Report of the Government Inspector, which does not confirm the opinion of Dr. Moseley, who is said to appear not to have any acquaintance with the requirements of the Code which he pronounces to be excessive. I must remind the House that Dr. Moseley stated at the inquest that Emma Rowley was suffering from inflammation of the right lung, and that the base of the left lung was congested, as well as from inflammation of the membranes of the brain, and that, at the *post-mortem* examination, "he discovered tubercles on the brain—in other words, that the primary or predisposing cause of the child's death was tubercular meningitis." Although the coroner is reported to have made the declaration quoted by the hon. Member, the jury, in their verdict, avoided all reference to mental strain, and stated that no blame attached to the teachers or the school authorities.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — SECRET INSTRUCTIONS TO SCHOOL INSPECTORS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the secret instructions issued last year to Government School Inspectors remain in force; and, whether, in view of the importance of Parliament being kept acquainted with the interpretation placed on the Code, by the Department, and of the expediency of making known to school managers the authorised mode of assessing the grant, he will this year communicate to Parliament all the instructions of the Department to the school inspectors?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, the instructions issued last year to School Inspectors were not so secret as the hon. Gentleman seems to suppose. Those instructions do remain in force; but we have made changes in the Code which will supersede some of them. It has never been found possible to administer properly the Parliamentary grant without issuing from time to time Circulars and confidential instructions to the many Inspectors who are in charge of school districts all over the country; and it is possible that after the next conference of Inspectors at Easter, in order to obtain uniformity of examination, additional instructions may be requisite. If so, they will be issued; but I cannot undertake, contrary to the invariable practice of the Department, to lay such instructions before Parliament.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF CONVENT TEACHERS.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that the salaries of Convent National Teachers are much lower than the salaries of Secular Teachers; and, if so, whether this grievance will be remedied by the Bill affecting National Teachers, which the Irish Government has promised to bring in this Session?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, Convent National teachers are in all cases at liberty to adopt the principle of classification, and when they do so their salaries are the same as those of secular teachers. When they do not adopt this principle, the amount of salary is regulated by the average number of pupils in daily attendance, and is considerably less than it would be if the teachers were classified. I cannot at present enter into details as to any of the provisions of the Bill which I intend to introduce.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he still adheres to his determination to postpone the introduction of this Bill until after the Sunday Closing Bill has been disposed of?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he could not answer the Question without some consideration.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACTS—DEATH FROM LEAD POISONING AT JARROW—CASE OF MARY WALSH.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the verdict of a jury at an adjourned inquest on the body of Mary Walsh, at the Police Court at Jarrow, on the 27th instant; whether such verdict was to the effect that the deceased died from the effects of chronic lead poisoning, contracted while following her employment; and, whether he has directed a special Report of the Inspector of Factories to be made upon the case; and, if so, whether he would consent to lay it upon the Table of the House?

Mr. HIBBERT, in reply, said, it appeared that at the works where the woman in question was employed every protection was given to the workpeople.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE X.—BULGARIA—THE VARNA RAILWAY.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Delegates of the Bulgarian Government have broken off negotiations on the subject of the Varna Railway, upon which they have been engaged for six months, and are leaving the country to-morrow, without making any arrangement to carry out the 10th Article of the Treaty of Berlin; and, if so, what course Her Majesty's Government propose to take to insist upon its performance?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the Bulgarian Delegates have not left the country. Although their present proposals have not been accepted by the Company, a reasonable time must be allowed to elapse for the further consideration by them of the counter-proposals of the Company. These negotiations are without prejudice to the proposal for arbitration by the Ambassadors, in the event of the negotiations failing; a proposal which, in principle, has been accepted by the Bulgarian Government.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: The noble Lord has not answered the last part of my Question.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I informed the hon. Member the other day that if these negotiations failed, then Her Majesty's Government would naturally revert to the proposal to submit the matter to arbitration.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: Does the noble Lord mean that they will take no further steps than they have taken for six years past?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I can only inform the hon. Member that Papers containing a full account of what has passed on this matter will shortly be laid before the House.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PENSIONS TO SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Mr. ROUND asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he is prepared to consider favourably the case of the teachers in elementary schools who having entered the profession under a Parliamentary guarantee of a pension, and having fulfilled all the conditions imposed by Parliament, are denied the pension because the fund is exhausted?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, I am anxious to be able to deal more favourably than at present with the applications for pensions from the teachers referred to by the hon. Member; and their case is now under consideration. But the Committee of this House who considered this subject in 1872 did not admit that the teachers "entered the profession under a Parliamentary guarantee." They reported that the Minutes of 1846 sanctioning a limited number of pensions "were not intended to hold out any promise," and "that the Committee of Council on Education took powers, but did not pledge themselves to grant pensions." We are, however, submitting the whole of the facts to the Treasury for their consideration.

NAVY—CONVEYANCE OF TROOPS—THE ROYAL MARINES.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that the battalion of Royal Marines which left England in the *Poonah*, were transferred at Malta to the *Gilsland*, on board which ship the accommodation was very inferior; whether the Royal Marines were put to this inconvenience in order to embark the 38th Regiment on board the *Poonah;* whether the same thing did not occur in 1882, when the Marine Battalion embarked for Egypt in the *Orontes* were transferred to another ship at Gibraltar, in order to make room for a Line Regiment; and, what is the reason for submitting the Royal Marines to this kind of inconvenience?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, before replying to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, perhaps he will allow me to express my belief that his Question cannot have been inspired by any member of the Corps of Royal Marines, who, I feel sure, would be the last to complain of any inconvenience to which the exigencies of the Public Service might expose them. The facts of the case are these. The *Poonah* was chartered to convey 500 Marines to Malta only. The Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean had ordered 256 Marines to be sent from Malta to Alexandria, and the *Gilsland* was taken up at Malta for that purpose. Before the *Poonah* arrived it was decided to send a battalion of the Line from Malta to Alexandria, and the *Poonah* was engaged for that duty, as she could take the whole battalion and other drafts, while the *Gilsland* could only accommodate 400. The *Gilsland* was accordingly got ready to leave Malta with Marines immediately on their arrival. Before their arrival Lord John Hay ordered all the 500 Marines to Alexandria; and the *Gilsland*, therefore, proceeded at once with all she could carry—namely, 400. The *Poonah* followed with 944 soldiers without dividing the battalion. The hon. and gallant Member refers to the case of the *Orontes* in 1882. That vessel conveyed 800 Marines for the Mediterranean Station with orders to transfer them to the *Tamar* at Gibraltar, because the *Orontes* was required to convey thence to Malta or Egypt the Berkshire Regiment with its transport animals, a duty which she was capable of performing, but for which the *Tamar* was not large enough, although she had ample accommodation for the Marines. From this detailed explanation the House will see that in both instances our action was governed by a consideration of the interests of the Public Service, to which I am certain that no Royal Marine, whether officer, non-commissioned officer, or private would desire his personal convenience to be preferred.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked, whether it was the fact that the military authorities at Malta had refused to permit a certain body of Regular soldiers to proceed to Egypt in the *Gilsland*?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the noble Lord desires information on that subject I must ask him to give Notice of his Question.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM gave Notice that he would repeat his Question on Monday.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE — SUPPLY OF ARTILLERY.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, On what date General Stephenson applied for a battery of Artillery to accompany Sir Gerald Graham's Force; on what date the application was refused; what were the reasons for refusing such an application; whether it was originally intended that the guns should be dragged through heavy sand and soil, under the disadvantages of heat and thirst, as appears from the following extract from Sir Gerald Graham's General Order:—

> "The General Officer Commanding thanks the Naval Brigade for their cheerful endurance during the severe work of dragging the guns over difficult country when suffering from heat and scarcity of water, and for their ready gallantry and steadiness under fire while serving the guns. The Naval Brigade contributed materially to the success of the action, and the General Officer Commanding cannot too highly express his thanks for their services;"

and, whether it was intended that Sir Gerald Graham should do without the Artillery, which thus accompanied him?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: General Stephenson inquired on the 14th of February whether a battery of Horse Artillery might be sent, as advised by Baker Pasha. On the following day he was instructed not to send it. General Gordon had, before his departure, emphatically deprecated the employment of Field Artillery in desert warfare, and had expressed an opinion that Hicks Pasha's defeat might have been caused by his being encumbered with guns, in which view he was supported by Lord Wolseley. It was considered, among other reasons, that the employment of horses should be diminished as much as possible, owing to scarcity of water. Ten mountain guns were sent on camels with General Graham's force, and that amount of Artillery was considered ample for the operation to be undertaken. The following is an extract from the Minute of Lord Wolseley, to which I refer:—

> "To have sent field guns with the force intended for the relief of Tokar would have added greatly to the difficulty of the water supply, as water would have to be carried on camels for the horses. Every extra camel accompanying the little force under General Graham weakens the fighting power of that force, as the protection of your camel train, when engaged in the desert with Arabs, is one of the most serious difficulties to be encountered. It is by no means certain that horses could drag the guns beyond Teb. Anyone who saw the attempt made on the evening of the 24th of August, 1882, and during the following night, by the Horse Artillery, to get their guns and ammunition waggons to the front for the action which was expected the following morning, will realize how absurd it would have been to have sent Field Artillery on wheels with the Tokar expedition."

It must be understood that Lord Wolseley, in expressing this opinion, does not impute the slightest blame to the Artillery. He merely explains the enormous difficulties of dragging guns of considerable weight through the sands of the desert.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked whether it was not more difficult for sailors and artillerymen to draw the guns than for horses to draw them? He also wished to know whether, in the expedition now being prepared against Osman Digna, there would be Field Artillery; and, if so, whether sailors and artillerymen were to drag the guns?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I have not yet received information as to the circumstances under which the Naval Brigade attached to General Graham's force thought it necessary to take these guns with them. The Naval Brigade did not form part of the force as organized either in Egypt or in this country. No doubt, General Graham was extremely glad to employ the sailors who were available at Trinkitat, and the best way to employ them was in dragging the guns as they had done on many former occasions. The force which is now about to be sent from Suakin will not have any Field Artillery. Orders were sent to the General Officer Commanding in Cairo and to General Graham to make any demand for this Artillery which they might consider necessary; but I have heard recently that General Graham is not going to employ any field guns.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE RIOTS AT LONDONDERRY—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Report of the Commissioners, sent to Londonderry to inquire into the circumstances of wounding a man at the time of the visit of the late Lord Mayor of Dublin, will be laid upon the Table of the House and printed before the coming assizes?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Report will be presented as soon as the Government have considered it with the evidence, and have come to conclusions about it. I have not heard from Ireland whether it has been resolved to change the venue in this case; but I am sure that if, in the interests of justice, it is thought right to have a change of venue, the House of Commons will not be disposed to interfere with the proceedings.

Mr. HEALY: I wish to ask whether it is a fact that the change of venue has not been granted at all; and whether Doherty has been allowed out of gaol because he became suddenly sick and unable to undertake the journey?

[No reply was given.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Mr. BIRKBECK asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether fishing vessels will be exempted from the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Bill?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; they will be exempted from the provisions of the present Bill; but if the fishermen or smack-owners should desire that any portion of the Bill should be applied to their industry, that can be most conveniently done by a subsequent measure.

Mr. GIBSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any truth in the report that the Merchant Shipping Bill, which stands for Second Reading on Monday next, will not be further proceeded with; and, whether, in the event of its being pressed forward, he intends, in deference to repeated requests, to refer it to a Select Committee?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; there is no truth in the report to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman refers. As regards his second Question, I can only say that I am now in communication with the representatives of the various interests affected by this Bill; and, under these circumstances, I think, at the present time, it would be premature to announce any decision on the part of the Government.

IRELAND—GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, DUBLIN.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Secretary in the General Register Office, Dublin, has lately assumed the title of Assistant Registrar General; whether he is authorised in so doing; whether any new responsibilities have been placed upon this officer; and, whether any increase of salary has been, or is about to be, attached to the office of secretary, in consequence of any new title or duties?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Mr. Matheson, the Secretary in the Department mentioned, was appointed Assistant Registrar General on the 18th of October, 1879, by the Registrar General with the approval of the then Lord Lieutenant, in accordance with Section 10 of the Act 26 *Vict.*, c. 11. He is, therefore, authorized to assume the title, as he has done for more than three years. The duties and responsibilities are those constituted under the section mentioned, and are only occasional. There is no salary attached to the office, nor is it intended to increase the salary attached to the office of Secretary.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—THE PROCLAMATION OF GENERAL GRAHAM AND ADMIRAL HEWETT.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had placed on the Paper the following Question:—To ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Joint Proclamation of Admiral Hewett and General Graham contains anything of the character of the following expressions reported by *The Standard* Correspondent at Suakin, under date March 5th:—

> "The English Force have come here not only to relieve Tokar, but to redress the wrongs under which you have so long suffered:"
>
> "The Great God who rules the Universe dare not send such scoundrels as Osman Digna:"
>
> "Awake; chase Osman Digna from your country:"
>
> "We promise protection and pardon to all who come in at once; otherwise the fate of those who fell at El Teb shall surely overtake you;"

and, if the Government does not approve of the Proclamation, whether they will take steps to obviate the misconception of their policy? The hon. Member said, the Question had been somewhat emasculated and edited. Perhaps, therefore, he had better simply ask the noble Lord whether the Proclamation appearing in *The Standard* was a substantially correct version; and, if not, what was the correct version? He would also ask, in reference to an expression by the Prime Minister, as reported in *The Standard*, whether there was any reason to suppose that the Proclamation emanated from General Gordon?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I certainly never heard any assertion made that this Proclamation emanated from General Gordon. I believe it is a fact that a Proclamation of this character has been issued by Admiral

Hewett and General Graham at Suakin. I am not, however, prepared to guarantee the exact accuracy of the translation of the Arabic original that has been telegraphed to this country. I am not certain, but I apprehend that it has been issued in Arabic, and certainly it appears to be composed in an Eastern style, and very different from that ordinarily adopted in documents of this description addressed to Western people. I am not prepared to say, on behalf of the Government, that they disapprove this Proclamation. I think that, probably, the terms employed are such as were supposed to be most effective for the purpose of inducing the tribes assembled under the leadership of Osman Digna to disperse peaceably, without any further effusion of blood. I think it extremely probable that those who are at Suakin are better acquainted with the circumstances of Osman Digna's private character than we are.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT—SUB-COMMISSION SITTING AT NAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Sheil) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a special Sub-Commission of the Land Court is to sit at Navan on the 17th of March; and, who are to be the members of this Sub-Commission?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Land Commissioners inform me that the Sub-Commission will sit in ordinary course at Navan on the 17th of March, as is announced in the published Circuit Lists. The members of the Sub-Commission are Messrs. Doyle, Howlan, Guiry, Davys, and Johnston.

GIBRALTAR—CESSION TO SPAIN.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (for Sir H. Drummond Wolff) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any communications have taken place between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Spain, or whether any other steps have been taken with the view of ceding Gibraltar to Spain?

Mr. GLADSTONE: My answer to the hon. Gentleman's Question is "No."

SUPPLY — ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES—VOTES OF CREDIT.

Mr. RAIKES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the Estimate for the expenditure involved in strengthening Her Majesty's Forces in the Mediterranean in connection with the Expedition to Egypt in 1882 was presented to this House in the form of a Vote of Credit, by Her Majesty's Command; whether this Estimate was not presented by Her Majesty's present Government subsequently to the recent Report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the subject of Votes of Credit; and, whether he can state to the House the reasons which have led Her Majesty's Government to depart from this and other precedents in submitting the Vote for the Red Sea Expedition as part of the Supplementary Estimates for Army Services on the present occasion?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I find no fault with the Question, and I find no fault with the answer given yesterday by my right hon. Friend. But I answer the Question because it refers to an act of my own as Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Question has three paragraphs. In regard to the first two, they are recitals of fact, and I believe they are accurate. With regard to the third paragraph, I think I may state very briefly what the history of these Votes of Credit has been. It is not going back very far, for 15 or 20 years ago Votes of Credit were unlimited in all respects. In the first place, the sums mentioned in them were disposable among any of the Military Services, thereby entailing a great abridgment of the power and privilege of Parliament; and, in the second place, they might be spent at any time. When I was Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the second Government of Lord Palmerston I think, I remember paying money under a Vote of Credit for the Russian War, which had closed, I believe, six or seven years before. The first reform was, I rather think, when Lord Sherbrooke was Chancellor of the Exchequer; and that was that Votes of Credit, instead of being available without limit of time, were confined to the year in which they were voted. That removed one objection to Votes of Credit. They still remained, however, available for any of the Services. Then came the investigation of the Committee, and the Government read the Report of the Committee, to the effect that it decidedly prefers the form of Estimates to be adopted with reference to Votes of Credit; and, consequently, the Treasury had proceeded upon the principle whenever it could be done. In this case the Vote was for a limited service, and for a service to be performed in a limited time, inasmuch as this Estimate is only available to the 31st of the present month. The Department, under these circumstances, were able to estimate with the usual degree of accuracy required in an Estimate of this kind; and, in conformity with the distinct recommendation of the Committee, the form of Estimate was preferred. In 1882 the sum was very large, and the service to which it was applicable might have extended to a period of no less than eight months. It was not possible, then, to frame an Estimate with sufficient accuracy to justify us in asking Parliament for money in that form. On that account the shape of the Vote of Credit was taken; but the rule which may be said to be established by the Treasury is, that whenever an Estimate can be framed by the Departments, this form of Estimates is preferred, as it would be by the Committee. Where the money cannot be asked in the form of Estimate on account of the magnitude or the indefiniteness of the service, the form of a Vote of Credit is necessarily the result.

PARLIAMENT — ORDER — RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE— QUESTIONS.

Mr. M'COAN said, he desired to take the opinion of the Speaker on a point of Order, which not merely affected himself, but concerned also every private Member in the House. It would be in the recollection of the House that yesterday he put a Question on the Notice Paper with regard to the conduct of our Agent in Egypt, in connection with the suppression of a French newspaper published in Cairo. After he had asked his Question another hon. Member opposite rose, and asked leave to couple with it another Question to the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) with reference to another paper. The noble Lord, in a manner which it was not for him (Mr. M'Coan) to call evasive, answered the Question put by the hon. Member opposite; but when he had done so he sat down, without giving a reply to his (Mr. M'Coan's) first Question. He (Mr. M'Coan) then, as respectfully as he could, asked for a reply to his own Question; but the noble Lord sat in what, if the adjective were not un-Parliamentary, he might call contumacious silence. Therefore he had no choice but to rise and give Notice that he would repeat his Question to-day. Half-an-hour after he handed the Question to the Clerk at the Table, and expected to see it on the Notice Paper. To his surprise, he found that the Question had not been put on the Paper; and, from what he had been able to ascertain on inquiry, it appeared that after he had handed the Question in, the Clerk had communicated with the noble Lord to know whether it would be convenient for him to answer it, and, the noble Lord's reply being that it would not be officially convenient for him to do so, the Question was suppressed. Apart from any question of courtesy or respect to hon. Members, it appeared to him that the matter was one so much affecting the rights and privileges of Members that he had no choice but to ask the Speaker for his ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was not aware of the specific point to be brought to my notice by the hon. Member for Wicklow County (Mr. M'Coan). If the hon. Member complains that the noble Lord did not answer a Question put to him by the hon. Member, I have to say that it is within the province of any Member of the Government to decline to give an answer to any Question put to him, if he considers that course to be in the interests of the Public Service; and in that case the responsibility for so declining rests entirely with the Member of the Government. If the hon. Member complains of any action taken by the Clerk at the Table, I am informed that what passed was, that the Question was handed in the ordinary form and presented to the Clerk at the Table; and I would remind the hon. Member that any Question so put in becomes the public property of the House, and is entitled to be seen by any Member of the House. I am assured that nothing more passed between any Clerk at the Table and the noble Lord than that the Clerk simply handed the Question to the noble Lord for information, which it is conducive to the interest of Public Business should be given, and which greatly facilitates the labours of this House.

MR. M'COAN: One remark, Sir, in partial correction of your views. My appeal to you was not intended as a complaint against the Clerks at the Table, to whose courtesy I am constantly indebted, but was intended to bring to your knowledge that which I think was an interference with the usual practice, the suppression of my Question. I do not complain that the Notice of the Question was communicated to the noble Lord, although I see a connection between its communication to him and its non-appearance on the Paper; but I wish to ask you, was it competent for the Clerk to suppress a Question which had been already printed, and has appeared on the Paper?

MR. SPEAKER: It would have been very convenient if the hon. Member had communicated with me beforehand as to the exact point he has to complain of, because his Question now comes on me by surprise. If the Question handed in by the hon. Member was substantially the same——

MR. M'COAN: Identically.

MR. SPEAKER: Identically the same with that which was previously asked, and which the noble Lord declined to answer, I am not prepared to say an identical Question can be repeated.

MR. M'COAN: He did not decline to answer the Question, but sat down without making any reply at all.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPPLY—ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES—FURTHER VOTES OF CREDIT.

MR. RAIKES asked the Prime Minister, Whether, in the event of military operations on the Red Sea littoral extending beyond the 31st of March—that was, beyond the end of the financial year—the Government proposed to come to the House for a further Vote of Credit?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a Question which would be more conveniently put to a Member of the War Department, because he would be able to answer with greater confidence. I limit myself to this—that the money which we are now asking Parliament for is only available to the 31st March. I do not wish to contemplate any possibility of going beyond that.

MR. SALT asked after what hour the Supplementary Estimates would not be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: I was in hope, from the extreme languor which, to say the least of it, characterized the greater part of the debate last night, that a portion of this evening might have sufficed to bring it to a natural death; but I am told that that is not so. If that is the case, I think it would be more for the convenience of those who desire to take part in it that we should not revert to it to-night; and, consequently, we propose to take the Civil Service Estimates to-night, and postpone the other.

MR. SALT: At what hour would the Civil Service Estimates be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: They would stand as usual; and if the House finds it worth while to go on with them, they will be proceeded with.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked if the Prime Minister proposed to take advantage of any opportunity there might be that evening for proceeding with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: What we are endeavouring to do is to get the second reading taken by consent. If we could do that, it would be desirable to take it as early as possible.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY—COMMISSARIAT AND TRANSPORT SERVICES (EGYPTIAN AND AFGHAN CAMPAIGNS).

RESOLUTION.

DR. CAMERON, in rising to call attention to the cruelty, waste of money, and danger to British Arms, in recent campaigns, caused by the defective organization of the Indian and British Transport and Commissariat Services; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British and Indian Armies in the recent Egyptian and Afghan Campaigns, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services,"

said, that on the Army Estimates last year he ventured to call attention to sundry shortcomings in connection with the Commissariat and Transport arrangements of the last Egyptian Campaign. There never had been a war in which more ample opportunity had been afforded for preparation; and, at the same time, there had never been a war which more conclusively demonstrated the utter incapacity of these Departments to cope with the demands of actual warfare. Telegraphing the other day—on the 26th February—from Suakin, the Correspondent of *The Daily News* said—

> "Dr. Macdowell, the chief medical officer, complains that his transport is insufficient, and says he will have the greatest difficulty to meet the requirements if casualties in the coming fight amount to, say, even 300."

Of course, he did not found his case upon that. He intended to rest it solely upon well-substantiated facts, and he referred to this telegram simply because, if substantiated, it would show that one of the most glaring faults of the last campaign was being again repeated in Egypt. At the end of a campaign it was usual for the gentlemen at the head of the several Departments of the Army to make Departmental Reports. He would like to know from the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War whether it was not the fact that the head of the Commissariat Department drew up a Departmental Report in connection with the operations of the last Egyptian War; and whether it was not true that in that Report the Chief of the Department said the Department had got into a positively unworkable state, that it was going from bad to worse, and that immediate re-organization was necessary if its efficiency was to be maintained? In the discussion on the Army Estimates last year the noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil)—whose opinion was of great value, because at one time he was Chief of the Ordnance—said his view was that, if it should be found necessary at the present moment, the country could not send out an Army Corps consisting of 20,000 men. [Lord EUSTACE CECIL: 30,000.] That was a very unsatisfactory state of matters with which to rest content; and if it was a true representation of the state of affairs, it was clear that if at any time we should find ourselves confronted with a well-organized and powerful foe we might have to pay very dearly for our neglect. In the last Egyptian War every branch of the transport broke down. The divisional transport, the auxiliary transport, the regimental transport alike broke down, and the commissariat arrangements entirely broke down, so far as they depended upon transport, and so far as they hung upon the absurd system of purchase and handling of supplies *en route*. According to the plan of the campaign, a Transport Corps was to have been attached to each Army division; but the transport belonging to one division did not land at Alexandria for a fortnight after the division to which it belonged arrived, and the result was that so much valuable time was thus lost in getting the men accustomed to their work. At Ismailia only one division—the second—was able to march with its transport. The first division and the Cavalry division landed without their transport, and the result was a very great amount of inconvenience and a very considerable amount of delay. Now, he asked, who was to blame for this dislocation of departmental arrangements? He confessed he did not know. Last year, with a view of raising the question, he put down a Motion for the reduction of the salary of the Director of Supplies, and the noble Lord (Lord Eustace Cecil) then said—

> "It was far from his object to suggest that, if any official ought to be censured, it should be a subordinate, but that the censure should go higher; and in reference to that point he would say nothing as to whether, in his opinion, the responsibility ought to rest upon the General or his Chief of the Staff."—(3 *Hansard*, [280] 1720.)

Now, he (Dr. Cameron) did not pretend to allocate blame; but what he would say was this—that the Commissariat Department entirely repudiated the blame. Therefore the matter was precisely one of those where inquiry was very desirable. At work in Egypt our transport arrangements proved utterly inefficient. The divisional transport attached to one division was unable to carry forward two days' supplies. No provision was made in the departmental scale for the carriage of fuel and forage; and the consequence was that, in order to make room for these, so much of the supplies for men had to be left behind. In one division, out of 55 baggage carts, 26 were taken up by the Divisional and Brigade Staffs and Commissariat and Transport gear, leaving only 29 for the carriage of supplies. The carts sent out had been reported over and over again as unfitted for the work. The drivers, supplied chiefly from the Infantry and the Militia Reserve, knew nothing of the management of horses, could neither ride nor drive properly, and the saddles supplied had been discarded in every branch of the Army as calculated to produce sore backs. Then, when we got hold of the railway, there was no one to control the movement of supplies, and there were constant complaints that the supplies most urgently wanted and ordered up could not be got to the front. Now, this question of the railway service was a most important one in modern warfare. In a war in Europe the railway would be to us of vital importance. The whole war would require to be fought out on the railways. Sir Robert Rawlinson stated that a railway was sent out to Egypt; but he (Dr. Cameron) was told by officers who were there that though it was understood that locomotives and other plant were sent out, when they were wanted they could not be got out of the vessels in which they were loaded, and were consequently sent home. When this matter was under discussion last year the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) said that when our Army landed at Ismailia there was absolutely no transport, and the statement of the hon. and gallant Baronet was quite correct. The hon. and gallant Baronet, moreover, said that at that precise juncture any number of camels could have been had on the spot at £16 a head, including kits; but, he added, a General Order had been issued that camels were not to be bought, and, owing to this red-tape regulation, the much-needed transport could not be procured. The Commissary General and the Transport Department were not to blame. They were not consulted; the Commissary General was, he understood, not even told of the intention of the Commander-in-Chief to change the base of operations in Ismailia. He went without being informed of what was to take place, or being afforded an opportunity of making arrangements. At that moment mules were being purchased at Smyrna, Syria, and elsewhere; but the purchase and shipment of these animals was conducted in such an unskilful way that out of 1,100 sent to Egypt, two-thirds, when landed, were totally unfit for work. Of the purchase of one lot of mules—those bought at Smyrna—he had been able to bring the particulars before the public. The purchase of these mules at Smyrna was effected in a most unbusiness-like manner. They were bought contrary to the advice of the veterinary surgeon, sent out with the officer intrusted with the purchase—that officer did not belong to the Commissariat Department—and they were sent on a voyage of nine days to Ismailia with nothing to feed upon except chopped straw. The result was that out of 600 animals 400 were landed unfit for service. Some were sold, some were shot, and the rest were got to work in from a week to a fortnight. But they were landed on September 5, and Tel-el-Kebir was fought on September 13; so that at the precise juncture when most needed they were unfit to work, and could not be got to work until the war had been decided. The saddles and saddlery sent from England were faulty. A quantity of Turkish pack-saddles which were procured were even worse. Many of them bore stains which testified to their powers of galling previous animals that had carried them, and, the mode of loading them not being apparent, they had to be reconsigned into store. The drivers sent out from England were inefficient; but the auxiliary drivers hired at Malta, Cyprus, and elsewhere were worse. They were described as a "rabble," hired under various agreements, which were not always kept, and as being sent out without proper clothing or war equipment. No pay books were forthcoming for long after the troops were landed, and the payments to the auxiliary drivers were irregular, and the desertions numerous. The regimental transport was on a scale corresponding with the rest. Each regiment on a war footing was supposed to include a certain amount of transport—men, waggons, and horses. But the horses were non-existent, or existed only on paper; the men were volunteers selected from the ranks at the last moment, and not half trained to their work; and as to the waggons, it was found when they were used in Egypt that the regulation number of horses, two to each cart, could not drag them empty over the sand. The consequence was that the regimental transport was constantly left far behind, and that large quantities of supplies were lost through its inefficiency. Indeed, so hopeless did some of the troops come to consider it to carry forward their reserve supplies by means of their regimental transport that they gave up the attempt altogether; and on one occasion a ton of biscuits and preserved meat, and about the same amount of oats, barley, and potatoes, intended for use on the following day, were found to have been deliberately abandoned on the camping ground from which our men had just marched. He might amplify these cases, but must pass on to the Commissariat. Among other provisions sent out was two months' flour. It was bought without consulting the Commissary General or his Staff. It was shipped in a manner of which the experience of the Commissariat Department led them to disapprove, and, when landed in Egypt and baked, the bread made from it was so bad as to be unfit for human food. That was the description given of it before Lord Morley's Committee. It was of the utmost importance to get at the second consignment of flour, which, though bad, was not so bad as the first. When the Commissariat officers at Ismailia proceeded to search for it, they found it so stowed away on board the *Empusa* that it took them two days of hard work to get at it. Groceries were urgently needed; but it took three days to get at the tea on board the *Amethyst*, and five days to get to the sugar. A lot of stores were sent out in cases so weak that they got smashed in the transit, and the stores were destroyed. Quantities of goods were sent out in cases too large for convenient handling, and had to be repacked. The wood supplied to the troops was in such large blocks that, where Native labour was not available to break it up, great inconvenience was entailed upon the troops dependent on it. A large quantity of the hay which was sent out was pressed by some new patent process, and was landed in such a musty and mildewed condition that it had to be used for bedding. Now, who was responsible for all this? Not the Commissariat Department. They were not consulted, as he had said, about the purchase of the flour, or about its mode of shipment, any more than they were about the hay or the mules. Both these operations were conducted in direct defiance of their experience. It was the system, the entire system, that was at fault. What he wanted was an independent inquiry into this system of divided responsibility and no one to blame. He understood that a departmental inquiry had been instituted; but he had heard of a good number of departmental inquiries, and he never knew one to end in any much more thorough-going reform than the establishment of some new lucrative berth for some favoured official. They had had far too many departmental inquiries in connection with the Commissariat. What was wanted was a good, thorough, and independent investigation. They knew what a prominent part sausages played in the German War. Well, sausages and cheese were sent out to Egypt; but they did not arrive till our troops occupied Cairo. A corps of Indian muleteers were sent, but did not arrive till the war was over. Stationery forms were always in great request in war time. All sorts of requisitions and transactions required stationery forms. Well, stationery forms were sent out, but were not landed in Egypt till a month after the troops had arrived. All the weighing machines sent out were found, when landed, to be broken. A lot of iron huts sent out did not arrive till the war was concluded, and the siege train, he understood, suffered the same fate. He again asked the noble Lord, had not the head of the Commissariat Department, who declared that it was in an unworkable condition, indicated that, so far from being in the way of improving, it was going from bad to worse? He asked him, had any of the recommendations which had been based on the experience of the Egyptian Campaign been carried into effect, or was the Department still in the same unworkable condition which its Chief admitted and lamented? It would be said he exaggerated. He could only say that if he got the Committee he asked for he was prepared to prove every statement he had made. He now came to the Afghan War. Telegraphing from Simla in June, 1879, *The Times* Correspondent said—

> "It is earnestly to be hoped that the successful termination of the campaign may not prevent the fullest inquiry into the causes of mismanagement so discreditable and so dangerous. The Khyber Force, was," he adds, "for some time so helpless, owing to the want of transport, that they could not have advanced to Cabul if Yakoob Khan had defied us."

In March of the same year, 1879, an officer of high rank in our Army, in a private letter which he held in his hand, wrote—

> "There is no doubt about the fact, which will come out some day, that the Candahar Force under General Stewart could not get on farther than Candahar owing to the great mortality among the transport animals."

Mr. Charles Williams, an experienced war correspondent, in his notes on the first portion of the Afghan War, said that in consequence of the impossibility of bringing up food for the Kurrum column the Native troops had to be put upon half-rations—

> "Seven hundred camels died in a week, and in less than a month it came about that this column could neither feed itself nor move back for food from want of transport. Nor was it much better," he added, "with General Biddulph's column; and it is a matter of fact that General Lacy's brigade was kept oscillating on the road between Candahar and Giriskh in this wise—when provisions reached it from Candahar it moved towards Giriskh three or four marches. As they were consumed, and the camels died, the brigade fell back towards Candahar until it met another convoy, when it resumed its march. And this was repeated not merely once or twice."

In his work on the Afghan War, Mr. Duke had published a letter from General Roberts in which that officer wrote —"In the Kurrum Pass our great difficulty was want of transport;" and if he were to quote from the work of Mr. Howard Hensman he might multiply evidence to the same effect. The history of the whole campaign was, however, summed up by a well-informed officer who had written to him (Dr. Cameron) in this single sentence—"Over and over again our columns could not move for want of transport." Had they been in such condition in the presence of a daring and enterprizing foe, the inability of the troops to move must certainly have led to disaster. He would not argue the question as to whether camels were the proper animals to employ in such a campaign; but, evidently, if used, only strong adult camels should have been relied upon for such service. But that was very far from being the system adopted by the Indian Department. Baby camels, camels incapacitated from age, ponies barely able to drag their own carcases through the campaign, were all bought up for the Transport Service.

> "Anything more atrocious than the cruelty and neglect culminating in such tremendous losses as occurred in the Afghan Campaign I have never heard or read of."

These were the words of an officer of great experience, and thoroughly well entitled to speak on the subject.

> "Putting aside," he continued, "the horrid cruelty, the direct loss must have been immense; but the indirect loss will be felt in the agricultural districts from which the animals were drawn for long years to come."

And in this connection Mr. Charles Williams mentioned that, in the opinion of the civil authorities in Scinde, one-third of the available animals in Scinde were used up in the first phase of the Afghan War. And the officer from whom he was quoting went on to say—

> "Veterinary science in the Afghan, as in the Egyptian Campaign, was utterly ignored by the Indian authorities. There was no veterinary organization—nothing but the grossest mismanagement as far as animals were concerned."

The Indian authorities entertained the utmost contempt for the dictates of veterinary science, and the result was that they neutralized in Afghanistan and afterwards in Egypt the elaborate precautions we took with the animals intended for the Transport Service of our troops. The letter from Simla already referred to contained the following words:—

> "I forward by this mail *Civil and Military Gazette* of 19th March, 1879. It will give you an idea of the fearful mortality among the camels at the front, and really we cannot be surprised at the loss. I have been fighting for sanction for administrative veterinary officers to be posted with the various columns at the front; but the Government will not sanction the expense. However, facts are cropping up showing the grossest neglect—or, rather, I should call it rascality. Steele reports that out of 70 camels he examined lying dead at Quetta 26 were but two years old. Mr. Edwards, veterinary surgeon, reports that many of the female camels were with calf, and died of slipping their calves. Thousands of animals have died from neglect, ignorance, and rascality. The officers of the Transport have been chiefly taken from Infantry regiments, and are ignorant to a degree upon all subjects pertaining to animals. I have reported all this officially, and there is sure to be an investigation, and Government is sure to burke the whole thing."

From that extract it would appear that the facts had been all officially reported, and if the Committee were granted, he should be able to prove, by means of the Reports, the facts he had stated. The Report had, of course, been burked, as it was predicted it would be. He wanted the facts brought to light for the sake of the efficiency of the Service, because India was going on pursuing the even tenour of her way; and on the first occasion on which our troops had to co-operate with Indian troops, if let alone, she was sure to land us in some mess. He now came to the cruelty and waste. If the House thought the statements he had to make were incredible—and to his mind they were so horrible as to make him wish to be able to believe they were incredible—all he could say was that if he got the Committee he undertook to prove every one of them. In the Kurrum column, of 6,000 animals 40 per cent were reported as either too young, too old, or in other respects so physically incapable of performing the work of the campaign that it was sheer waste of public money to buy them. Everywhere the veterinary surgeons reported the same thing as to the large number of unfit animals purchased for the Transport Service in the Afghan Campaign. Of a batch of 400 ponies inspected at Jhelum, 395 were condemned as utterly unfit for the work. Again and again he found it reported that when animals had been purchased under proper veterinary supervision, the fact that they had been so purchased was at once apparent, and among them the number of rejections for unfitness for work was not more than 5 per cent. But the Indian authorities treated veterinary opinions with the most profound contempt. They held, he was told, that the requirements of the veterinary surgeons were far too high, and maintained that what they wanted was baggage animals that could carry a load of so many pounds weight. Accordingly, they loaded the wretched animals, including the condemned ponies, and sent the 395 to the front with the rest. The result was that the miserable brutes died by the way, and we lost not only the money expended in purchasing them, but also the loads they carried. Anything more cruel than sending on animals unfit for such service was to him inconceivable. They stood as so many animals of burden on paper; but we lost both the animals and their loads. No improvement in this state of things took place as the war went on; and it was estimated by competent authorities that in the two phases of the Afghan Campaign no fewer than 60,000 animals and 30,000 other baggage and slaughter animals died, and of these it was estimated that at least one-half died because they were utterly unfit for the work for which they were bought. He did not know the exact value of the animals thus purchased; but, taking the camels at £20 a-head, the loss sustained in camels alone must have been upwards of £500,000 sterling, and the cost directly and indirectly to the British taxpayer in beasts and material, including the loss caused by the delays from the breakdown of the transport, must have amounted to many times that sum. And now he came to the cruelty, and he ventured to say that any man with the smallest feelings of humanity would shudder at the barest recital of it. From every quarter it was described as having been simply atrocious. The transport animals were in charge of ignorant Native salootries or farriers. Infectious diseases were rife amongst the animals; and no precautions were taken to prevent their spread. Animals suffering from rinderpest, scabies, glanders, and pleuro-pneumonia were beaten forward with the rest without any precaution taken to separate them, and the consequence was that every elephant in the Kurrum column got the foot-and-mouth disease, and in some cases the soles of their feet sloughed off, carrying the nails with them. No provision was made for shoeing animals; and at a dozen stations visited by one veterinary officer there were no shoes, no nails, no workmen. No care was taken to prevent sore backs; there were no dressings, no medicines, no instruments. It was with difficulty veterinary surgeons could get sacking to put over wounds to keep off the flies. At Quetta, out of 15,000 animals 80 per cent of the ponies and 20 per cent of the mules suffered from sore backs. At Cabul there were 1,700 cases of sore backs. Hon. Members might think it absurd to make so much fuss about sore backs; but the sore backs to which he referred were such as, by their extent and fœtor, sickened even the most experienced veterinary surgeons—backs on which the packs had eaten through the muscles and laid bare the ribs beneath. Sore backs swarming with maggots, backs in camels in which the sores had laid bare the spinous processes of the vertebræ, and in which the tissues were so infiltrated with purulent matter that when, to put them out of pain, the wretched beasts were shot, the coverings of the back gave way with the shock of the animal's fall, ejecting the fœtid contents to a considerable distance. Such a state of things might seem incredible; but if he were granted the Committee he asked for he would be prepared to prove that what he had said was literally true. It might be said such cases were rare; they were not rare, they were common. From everywhere he had the same testimony. One gentleman going through the Bolan Pass counted as many as 300 dead camels on one side, and 200 on the other, and saw many others dying and the ravens picking out their eyes while they were yet alive. He could multiply instances of this kind, but would content himself with one wholesale case. Between October and December, 1880, 2,000 animals were sent to Sherawak to pick up. Of course, there was no veterinary surgeon in attendance. In the month of March the animals that survived were sold by auction. They numbered but 10 or 15; all the rest were rotting in the valley. The same mismanagement existed from the beginning to the end of the Afghan War, and the same mismanagement was repeated in connection with the Egyptian War. Among the witnesses as to the cause of the Afghan breakdown was General Showers, who ascribed the failure in the Transport arrangements as largely to the absence of all administrative veterinary control. He said—

> "The fact of there having been no administrative veterinary officer with any of the columns will hardly be credited."

Since this report the Indian Government, so little economical in many other affairs, had been guilty of the economy of cutting down their veterinary staff one-third —from 70 to 46. When they sent their contingent to Egypt there were only four veterinary surgeons attached to it. Two of these went on with the troops, and two only remained with the transport, which embraced 6,000 or 7,000 animals. In our British Forces we considered it necessary to send one veterinary surgeon for every 250 or 300 animals. The result of this Indian arrangement was that glanders was introduced into Egypt once, and rinderpest on two separate occasions, despite elaborate precautions by our own Veterinary Department. He did not propose to offer any suggestions as to how this state of things should be remedied. He could, if necessary, quote a number of what appeared to be common-sense suggestions that had been made; but it was his opinion that what was above all things required was a knowledge of the facts, and of the extent of the evil. If the Committee he asked for was appointed, it would have no difficulty in finding numbers of competent men to make suggestions; and he would very much rather trust to the common sense of a Committee of the House of Commons for a reform of the evils which he had endeavoured to expose than trust the matter to the consideration of a Departmental Committee of experts. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

MR. PULESTON, in seconding the Resolution, said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow deserved thanks for bringing forward a matter of great importance and practical utility, and one vitally concerning the interests of the nation. If but one-quarter of the statements and statistics given to the House by his hon. Friend were true, even then it was difficult to conceive how the Government should hesitate for a moment to grant the Committee now asked for. The country would regard it as extraordinary if the proposed inquiry were withheld, in face of the startling and shocking facts presented to the House by his hon. Friend, who had stated on his own responsibility that he would bring before the Committee abundant testimony to the correctness of every statement he had made. He, therefore, preferred to believe that the Government would at once respond by accepting the terms of the Resolution. He regretted to see so many Benches empty while his hon. Friend was speaking; but in those days, unhappily, under the auspices of the present Government, the House had become intoxicated and saturated with questions of Bradlaughism and other exciting topics, and had lost its taste for healthier and more useful discussions. In days gone by Members discussed the Estimates, considering them to be most important matters closely affecting the well-being of the country; but now, when the House attempted legitimate work, hon. Members suddenly vanished. The sooner, however, they reverted to the serious consideration of matters like the one now before them, the better it would be for the credit of the House and the interests of the country. When our Commissariat and Transport notoriously broke down in the Crimean War the remedy was suggested that the control should be taken away from the Treasury, and the control of the Transport was then vested in the War Office, and very properly; but, nevertheless, little improvement resulted. Then, in 1867, he thought they had Lord Strathnairn's Committee, which made a Report on the French model. No notice was taken of that Report, and, perhaps, the French system would not now be approved; but, at all events, it was an effort in the right direction. Yet nothing more was done until 1870, when all of a sudden a panic arose as to probable contingencies connected with the Franco-German War. It was then feared that the same breakdown that happened in the Crimea and elsewhere would recur if the Commissariat and Transport Services were called upon. When Lord Cranbrook was Secretary of State for War he abolished the civilian Controller—also a right thing to do; and then they had a Committee, with Lord Cadogan as Chairman; but, forgetting the proverb about peace being the right time to prepare for war, nothing effectual was done, and the consequence was that when war suddenly arose everything was hurry-scurry and wild confusion. He did not now ask for the adoption of any specific plan; but let the Government grant a Select Committee which would thrash out that subject, and before the Committee everything they had to urge *pro* and *con* could be brought forward by the Government. His hon. Friend had referred to the war in Afghanistan. In that case Bombay was forced to supply camels and other baggage animals, and had to do it in a very haphazard sort of way, scouring the whole of Scinde for everything. Within three or four months after that pretty much the whole of the beasts of burden in Scinde were destroyed. We had devoted ourselves to purchasing camels which were too young or too old, and which were not suited for the purposes of frontier war. Not only had this loss of money been knowingly incurred, but it had been an utterly useless sacrifice; the public interest had not been advanced by the expenditure; on the contrary, human life would absolutely have been saved by the practice of economy. As regarded the supply of mules, the best thing would be for the Government to breed them in India. It might be urged against this that we should have to keep them in times of peace; but they might be let out to the cultivators of the soil, and the Government would have them when they were in need of them. Thus the breeding of mules would entail no loss whatever on the Government; while in times of famine it would be found of the greatest importance to have mule trains. Thus the keeping of mules would not be a luxury as it had been described, but a source of profit. With regard to the loss of transport animals by General Stewart's column, not only had there been the danger of being deprived of means of transport, but in one case 500 dead mules lay absolutely polluting the air and water and imperilling life. In Egypt, again, he thought that we had been very fortunate in being victorious at Tel-el-Kebir, for such had been the state of affairs that we could not have remained there much longer without starvation and the difficulties of transport operating against us. As it was, the want of transport had locked the troops up here and there, not to speak of the great loss of stores incurred. Gatlings were no use unless properly horsed; but in Egypt any tagrag and bobtail out of the camp followers had been appointed to look after the horses. The Surveyor General of Ordnance said last year that we should wait until we saw the weak points in our transport system before any changes were undertaken. Those weak points were now apparent, and had called forth the Resolution of his hon. Friend. He would only add that this question of Transport and Commissariat was one of deep interest, not only to the Army itself, but to the country; and he hoped that the Government would grant this Committee of Inquiry. By so doing they would have the credit with the public at large of acting in the best interests of the nation.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British and Indian Armies in the recent Egyptian and Afghan Campaigns, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services,"—(*Dr. Cameron*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. J. K. CROSS: Sir, I will not discuss whether the Afghan War is a Party question or not, but will answer the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), with reference to the Afghan Campaign, leaving my hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance to deal with the more contentious question of the Egyptian War. The facts of the case are much as they have been brought to the attention of the House. My hon. Friend has spoken of the outbreak of the War in 1878, and described the condition of the Transport at the time, as well as its condition on the second outbreak, after the massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari in September, 1879. There is no doubt that, when the first period of the Afghan War had ceased, the Transport material had been dispersed. The Transport demand for the second period of the Afghan War was very sudden, very large, and required the utmost expedition. Sir Michael Kennedy, in his Report, pointed out the difficulties which occurred at the time. He says—

> "With regard to the Commissariat and Transport, this state of things was very undesirable. The disadvantages it involved were not unrecognized or under-estimated; but it could not be avoided if the operations were to be carried through at all. It was a race against time. The railways brought troops and supplies to the front; and it was absolutely necessary for political, military, and even economic purposes, to strike quickly, and nothing was ready at the commencement."

DR. CAMERON: I rise to Order. The hon. Gentleman is quoting from a Report not on the Table. May I ask him to lay it on the Table?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member quotes from a Report no doubt he will lay it on the Table.

MR. J. K. CROSS: I was going to say I would lay it on the Table. The extent of the operations which had to be performed is also very well described by Sir Michael Kennedy—

> "The amount of material which those considerable demands from first to last involved, for forces that numbered in the aggregate 42,600 fighting men, 40,000 followers, and 72,000 animals, was very great, when it is taken into consideration that the troops would necessarily depend to some extent on the natural produce of the country; and, like all armies operating in advance of a distant base, would be compelled to draw bulky articles, such as grain and forage, from the districts occupied. There was, however, some occasional difficulty in obtaining local supplies; but it never lasted long, or pressed very heavily. The troops or followers never for a day suffered any want or inconvenience, although the animals were occasionally short of rations."

That was the Report made after the second period of the Afghan War; and, though my hon. Friend alluded in strong terms to the troops being on half rations, the contrary is proved, so far as the second period of the war is concerned.

DR. CAMERON: I was only quoting from a Paper on the subject.

MR. J. K. CROSS: On the massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari in September, 1879, on the unexpected investment of Sir Frederick Roberts at Sherpur in December, 1879, and on the Maiwand disaster in July, 1880, thousands of troops were pushed to the front, and tens of thousands of store and baggage animals—camels, mules, ponies, bullocks, anything that could carry a shot or a tent pole, had to be collected on the instant, as it were. The demand being so imperative, and the emergency so pressing, it was only natural that all kinds of animals should be pressed into the net; and, from the fact that efficient animals could not be got, inefficient ones had to be accepted by the Transport officers, even though it must have been known that a large number of them would fail. It should be remembered that, when Sir Louis Cavagnari's mission was peacefully settled at Cabul, the extra Transport Service used in the previous advance was scattered and practically broken up. On the renewal of the war, its re-organization was placed in the hands of Sir Michael Kennedy. From the Report of Sir Michael Kennedy on the Supply and Transport arrangements during the campaign in North Afghanistan and the Kurrum Valley in 1879-80, it is very clear that we had been caught in a state of unreadiness. Everything had to be improvised, and we were evidently without experienced Transport officers or Transport Service. It was arranged to separate the Transport from the Commissariat Establishment, especially in the field beyond the base, and to place it, giving it separate organization, more closely under the General Officer in command. This Report of Sir Michael Kennedy on the deficiencies of the Transport is, perhaps, one of the most melancholy pieces of military reading ever published. But I think, if my hon. Friend will examine into the matter carefully, he will find that, as the war went on, Sir Michael Kennedy overcame all difficulty. Simultaneously with General Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar, General Stewart returned to India; and on these two occasions the Transport seems to have been everything that could have been desired. General Roberts marched from Cabul to Candahar, by Ghazni, with 10,000 men, 8,000 followers, and 8,400 Transport animals. The distance was 313 miles, he did it in 22 days, or at the rate of 14½ miles a day, and out of his 8,400 Transport animals there was not more than 1,050 casualties. General Stewart marched from Cabul to Peshawur with 9,559 Transport animals, and had 1,023 casualties. The losses and troubles of the Transport, especially during the second period of the campaign, have caused the Government of India to organize a regular Transport depôt, based on a plan which is the result of the experience gained during this campaign, and the principle on which this plan is based is that a certain portion of the Indian Army should be equipped with one-half regimental transport. This force will embrace 46,000 men, of whom 24,000 are stationed on the frontier. The Transport will be distributed over a larger number of regiments than it will suffice completely to mobilize. This is done to familiarize a considerable number of troops with the management of Transport. Half this number, or about 23,000 men, can be put into the field in their respective districts, fully equipped with transport on the Cabul scale, without requiring additional carriage. For this Transport it is not proposed to employ officers of the British Veterinary Establishment. Experience of more than 25 years on the frontier has proved that regiments can be maintained in a state of perfect mobility, taking charge of their own Transport Establishment, and keeping it thoroughly efficient, without European advice; and there seems no reason to question that similar results would attend similar means on a larger scale. To increase the number and efficiency of the salootree class the Government has recently established in Bombay, Bengal, the Punjab, and Burmah, Veterinary Colleges, presided over by three eminent veterinary surgeons. In 1881-2 the Government of India proposed a reduction of the British Veterinary Establishment in India from 73 to 49. Their reason was the intended introduction for the horses of the British troops of the station hospital system, similar to that which obtained for the men. Under this system the Government of India was satisfied that, while a smaller number of officers would be required, greater efficiency would be secured. The question of the establishment to be ultimately maintained, and its organization, is not yet settled. No reduction has yet been made, and, meanwhile, the actual number of veterinary surgeons in the British Establishments now employed in India is 64. There are 4 administrative officers—namely, 2 Bengal, 1 Madras, and 1 Bombay; 10 on Staff duties—namely, 6 Bengal, 3 Madras, 1 Bombay; and 48 on station and regimental work—namely, 26 Bengal, 10 Madras, 7 Bombay; and there are 2 officers on furlough. This is 15 in excess of the number proposed by the Government of India, and it gives a very efficient service. The total number of horses with the British troops in India is 10,837, including 1,000 mules belonging to the British Mountain Batteries. If you divide this number of animals among the 48 veterinary officers engaged in station or regimental work, it gives about 225 animals per officer. The four regiments of Madras Native Cavalry are in charge of our veterinary officers, and they have 1,273 horses, so these gentlemen have now an average of 300 animals each. The Bengal and Bombay Cavalry number 21,477 horses, and it may, perhaps, be that the men, being owners of their horses, and having a personal interest in their health, look well after them. There is no doubt of the thorough efficiency of the Indian Cavalry; that efficiency was, I believe, clearly demonstrated in the Egyptian Campaign. Although the veterinary hospitals of the Bombay and Bengal Native Cavalry never have been under British veterinary care, that is not supposed to have rendered them less efficient or economical; and, as at present advised, the Government of India have no intention of increasing the number of European veterinary officers in charge. The hon.

Gentleman proposes to have a Committee of Inquiry not only into what has happened in Egypt, but into what occurred during the Afghan War. I think I have shown that the Indian officers have taken the question of the Afghan War very much to heart, and have reorganized the Transport Department on the lines I have described. It therefore seems quite unnecessary that we should have an inquiry into this subject. I do not see how the Indian Government could be much bettered by any inquiry made in this country. At the present time, a very large number of officers, who are fully competent to manage the whole of the affairs of the Army, have taken this Report, and have examined it very thoroughly, and come to certain conclusions upon it. Therefore it seems to me, with all due deference to my hon. Friend, that it would be very much better that we should let the Indian Government alone, with the instructions it has received from the Indian Office to press on as much as they can the thorough organization of their Transport Department; and I have no doubt, if it is left to them, it will be arranged in the most perfect possible manner.

Colonel MILNE-HOME, in supporting the Resolution, said, he considered that an inquiry into what happened in the Egyptian Campaign, including the Afghan Campaign, in the scope of the Committee would not be thrown away. His hon. Friend had stated exactly what had taken place in Egypt. He had seen himself the excellence of the Indian troops, particularly the Cavalry; and he was convinced that we in this country might learn very many lessons from the management of those departments of the Indian Army. But with regard to Egypt he should be surprised—and the whole Service to which he had the honour to belong would be surprised—and disappointed if the Committee was not appointed. He thought the case had been so thoroughly made out by the hon. Member that the Government had no alternative. When he came to the House he certainly did not think it would be incumbent upon him to make any remarks; but the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India seemed rather to object, and he was afraid that the noble Lord might object to the other portion of the inquiry. Under these circumstances, he should think it wrong to sit silent, for he was convinced the whole Service looked forward to the appointment of the Committee. He was glad his hon. Friend had got such a position on the Paper that he would be able to go to a Division; and, certainly, if he went, he (Colonel Milne-Home) would vote with him. He had no intention of repeating what the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution had said. It seemed to him his hon. Friend had entirely made out his case. If he had not, then it would be for the Committee which he wished appointed to brand him before the country for having brought before the House of Commons most unfounded charges. Therefore, upon that ground, having said that he was prepared to prove what he had stated, he (Colonel Milne-Home) thought the Government should grant a Committee to inquire into the management, or rather mismanagement, of these Departments in Egypt. His hon. Friend had received evidence from many quarters, and, from his knowledge of him, he had no doubt his hon. Friend had thoroughly sifted it. But with regard to the portion of the Service with which he (Colonel Milne-Home) was connected, he could say that every word that fell from his hon. Friend was perfectly true. It was perfectly true that the Transport and Commissariat were nowhere in Egypt. The Cavalry depended as long possible on the ships; and when they left Ismailia it was not owing to the Transport and Commissariat Departments and the management at home that they got any food at all—at the start at all events. It was the good fortune of the Cavalry, after taking the camp of Mahsameh, to find plenty of food for man and beast, which had been left behind by Arabi. Had it not been for that, they would have had to retire, and probably the Egyptian Campaign would have been much longer than it really was. Therefore, at the very outset, he would say, the Transport broke down completely. His hon. Friend had alluded to the regimental transport. They were told before they left this country that the desert, through which they were to pass, was like a paved road. But it was no such thing. The sand was so deep that the carts could hardly be drawn over it, and some of the carts of the regiment to which he belonged were left in the desert to this day. It was quite true that transport horses were supplied to regiments; but he did not think those who understood the desire of the commanding officers to keep the best horses at home would be surprised to hear that the transport horses sent out averaged about the age of 20 years. Many of them had been in previous campaigns, and could not, therefore, be expected to be of much service. Then, as to the railway, it was true engines and immense appliances were sent out; but he knew there was no hoisting gear sufficiently strong to hoist them from the ships, and they had to remain there. What his hon. Friend had stated as to the matter of camels was also perfectly true. There was no doubt about it that the only machines fit to cross the desert were camels, and they found that out by experience by appropriating some stray camels. As he had said, had the Cavalry not had the good fortune to find everything to their hand at Mahsameh, they would have had to return; and had not the Infantry and the rest of the Army who had attacked Tel-el-Kebir been equally fortunate there, they would have been compelled to retire, and the Army would have been driven back to Ismailia. As it was, they trusted a great deal to Arabi for their food by the way; and, as he had already said, through the campaign the Commissariat and the Transport were nowhere at all. These being absolute facts, surely the Government could not refuse to grant a Committee to inquire why and whence this state of things arose. Allusion had been made to the fact that similar previous inquiries had resulted only in Blue Books. He was old enough to remember what took place in the Crimea, and the mismanagement there of all sorts, especially of the Transport and the Commissariat. It was 30 years since the Crimean Campaign, yet we did not seem to be very much further on in these matters. If this Committee were appointed, he trusted they would have something more than Blue Books, and that they would see due effect given to the recommendations made, whatever Government might be in Office.

Mr. CARBUTT said, the country would never be satisfied until this question was cleared up. His contention was that nothing said by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India had any real bearing upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). The mistake made by the Government, in his view, was in employing on every possible occasion military men to perform duties which could be much better and more cheaply and efficiently performed by civilians, and in not taking sufficient advantage of the mechanical appliances and mechanical skill at their disposal, not only for the transport of war material in time of war, but in its unshipment when it reached the place at which it was intended to be used, or, at any rate, to be disembarked.

Sir HARRY VERNEY said, he had no wish to criticize harshly anything that had been done in the past in reference to the Transport and Commissariat Services; but he wished to point out that reform was necessary in regard to both of them, the existing state of things being an absolute scandal to the country. His own view was that, having regard to our experiences in the past, provision ought to be made for an Army Corps of at least 25,000 men, who should be fully equipped and ready at any moment to proceed on military service to any part of the world. England was the most wealthy nation in the world; but when war broke out where was she? They should insist upon the Government moving in this matter, feeling satisfied that the country would not grudge the expenditure.

Mr. BRAND said, the speech of the Mover of the Motion for a Committee was replete with assertions of a very startling nature, without any proof whatever being given, and without any authority for them. There were certain statements which the hon. Gentleman made which he (Mr. Brand) could more or less directly meet; and if these statements were examples of his other statements, then there was little foundation of fact in them. For instance, the hon. Gentleman stated that there were at Ismailia, when the troops disembarked, a quantity of camels for sale, and which could have been bought for £16 a-piece——

Dr. CAMERON: I beg pardon. I quoted a statement made by the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot).

Mr. BRAND said, that only showed what he was endeavouring to prove—namely, that a great many of these statements were founded on hearsay. Then the hon. Gentleman said the saddles sent out from England were bad. He (Mr. Brand) would admit only this as to the pack saddles, that they were not so well fitted for pack service as the Indian saddles. The hon. Gentleman said the advice of the Commissariat Department had not been taken in the purchase of a quantity of hay which had turned out bad; but the fact was the hay had been purchased in the usual manner, and was inspected by officers of the Commissariat Department. The hon. Member said that the Commissary General had published a Report in which he said that the Department was going from bad to worse. All that he could say was that that Report was not within his knowledge, although, undoubtedly, the Commissary General had recommended that certain changes should be made in the Department. The hon. Gentleman said there never was a war which had so clearly proved the insufficiency of the Medical Transport Service; and to enforce that statement he quoted the opinion of the principal medical officer at Trinkitat, to the effect that the Transport in the Soudan would not have sufficed for 300 wounded. They had no report whatever as to the Transport; but it was clear that 300 wounded out of so small a force as that engaged would have been a very large number indeed. His reply was that, under great difficulty, and after the first few days, the Commissariat Department in Egypt worked well, that the system was being remedied in a good many particulars, and that a Committee at the War Office was now inquiring into the whole matter of the organization of the Department. The hon. Gentleman also spoke of the suffering caused to the troops in Afghanistan and Egypt; but Lord Morley's Committee had shown that in the case of Egypt there was plenty of fresh meat, biscuits, and minor comforts for the troops. With the exception of a small temporary difficulty on arrival at Ismailia, the patients were not in want of any of those supplies. There was no doubt in his mind, after reading the Report, that the suffering imposed upon the men and officers in Egypt was suffering which was inseparable, unfortunately, from active service in a hot climate. With regard to the conduct of the Veterinary Department, there was no doubt that the horses and mules had suffered greatly from the heat, the flies, and the sand, as well as from the want of water, while they had been sent on active service before they had had time to recover from their long sea voyage. But what, he would ask, would have been the condition of those animals if the Veterinary Department had not been thoroughly efficient, and if its members had not done their duty in a most admirable manner? At the time when the cattle were landed, rinderpest was rife at Odessa, from whence we obtained slaughter cattle; but, owing to the precautions of the principal veterinary officer, who had them inspected and doubtful animals slaughtered, the disease was prevented. The glanders having broken out among one troop of the Bengal Cavalry, the principal veterinary officer ordered the infected animals to be destroyed and the remainder of the troop isolated, and thus this disease also was prevented from spreading. It must, therefore, be taken that the Veterinary Department in Egypt was thoroughly well organized. The hon. Member had arrived at the conclusion that the whole system of the Commissariat Department was wrong; and he directed his complaints, in the first place, against the way in which the Department was officered. He admitted that nothing was more important than that the officers of the Department should be well trained. But what were the facts of the case? At the present time the Department was officered by trained Departmental officers, and by officers who came temporarily from the regiments to the Department. The old class of officers was being gradually absorbed, and in course of time the Department would consist of officers temporarily engaged. In 1878 the late Government effected certain changes in the Commissariat and Transport; and if any mistake were made then, it was in not making it a thoroughly military Department. Giving his own personal opinion, the best plan to be pursued was to follow in the lines indicated by that change, and constitute the Department a portion of the regular Staff of the Army, imposing duties of transport and supply upon the Staff officers under the Commander-in-Chief. One condition was essential—that those officers should be thoroughly trained for the work they had to perform. A Departmental Committee was now sitting at the War Office to inquire into this subject. It was often said when this country went to war it was unprepared in the matter of Commissariat and Transport. But the system in this country was identically the same as in other European countries. There was not a single instance in which any European country maintained in time of peace the transport necessary for a time of war. Even if it were desirable, it would be financially impracticable, as it was impossible to know what sort of transport would be required. In the Red River, in 1870, the transport was canoes and carriers; in Ashantee, entirely carriers, and no animals; in Natal, we had transport of oxen and mules; in Egypt, pack transport; and in Suakin, camel transport. That, he thought, clearly showed, even if they maintained in this country a large stock of transport and material, they would find, when they went to war, very possibly that they had not the materials required for the service. What was wanted was a knowledge of the countries where they could purchase the animals they required at the shortest notice; and they also wanted experienced officers to send out to buy those transport animals. Steps had been taken to get a nucleus of drivers, and a small nucleus of transport was kept in this country for the purpose of training; and, in addition, steps had been taken to have in hand, in case of necessity, a body of skilled auxiliary drivers. When the Egyptian War took place the Indian Government provided an organized body of drivers; and in the case of any wars in which they might have to engage in foreign countries, a body of men such as he had described would be of immense advantage. Upon what facts did the hon. Member rely in order to prove that there had been a breakdown of the Transport Service in Egypt? With regard to the flour, it was purchased under the best advice; it no doubt suffered from the excessive heat and from prolonged detention at Alexandria in the hold of the ship. But the hon. Member had failed to prove that even if it had been inspected by the Commissariat the same thing would not have happened. In future, however, they would take care to send flour, not in barrels, but, as far as possible, when necessary, in tin cases. As to the hay, it was actually inspected and passed by the Commissariat. On the whole, he thought the House would agree with him that, considering the enormous amount of materials and stores sent out, very few mistakes, indeed, had been committed. He might remind the House that the Transport Service itself really had no real trial in Egypt, inasmuch as the war only lasted three weeks from the disembarkation of the troops till the day on which the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was fought. The transport was not disembarked for three or four days after the troops were landed, and that was for military reasons over which Transport officers had no control. The transport was organized on the assumption that they would have possession of the railway and Canal; but, owing to the action taken by the enemy, it was impossible to take advantage of the railway and Canal for several days. When, however, the obstructions were removed, the railway and Canal afforded sufficient transport. We should never have been able to take such prompt action in shipping supplies to the East if the late Government had not authorized the establishment of a reserve store at Woolwich, which had been of very great value in this crisis. The hon. Gentleman further complained of division of responsibility in the Department. In reality there was no division of responsibility whatever, and in practice there was no difference between the system in times of peace and during war. He maintained that the hon. Gentleman had not proved his case with respect to the Egyptian Expedition. In all recent wars there had been no breakdown in the Transport Service—he might even say no hitch. The Government did not admit that there was any necessity for the proposed inquiry; but still some good might possibly arise from having the statements of the hon. Gentleman verified, or otherwise, as the case might be. Therefore, on the understanding that this inquiry was to be confined entirely to the operations in the recent Egyptian Campaign, and that it was also to be confined to the working of the Commissariat and Transport Service—for the medical arrangements had already been inquired into by the Committee over which Lord Morley presided—the Secretary of State for War would not oppose the Resolution.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL said, he did not like the debate to close, after the speeches which had been made and the references made to himself, without saying a few words. The hon. Mover of the Resolution had quoted him as saying that we could not put 30,000 men into the field. What he had said was that it would be impossible to send an Army Corps of that number into the field properly equipped, and it certainly would be impossible to send out a second such Corps. He had repeatedly called the attention of the House to that state of things, which was most unsatisfactory. His hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance, while admitting our deficiencies in respect of Transport officers and drivers in case of emergency, had said that no country in the world kept up a Commissariat Service sufficient for its needs. No doubt that was so; but he felt sure that there were several Foreign Powers which could, on an emergency, put into the field an Army Corps of 30,000 or 40,000, or even more. It was the duty of the Executive to see that we were sufficiently provided in this respect. The Secretary of State for War should have the courage of his opinions. If it was necessary that a *corps d'armée* should be equipped at every point, and ready to proceed at the shortest notice, he thought the Secretary of State for War was bound to come to the House and say so, and at the same time ask the House to provide the necessary money. He had been on foreign service in the field, and was, therefore, quite ready to admit that it was not always possible for a person in that position to judge of anything more than what took place under his own observation. It was seen that, for some reason or another, a deficiency existed; but a person so placed was not sufficiently behind the scenes to know to what extent that deficiency existed. Some of the reasons for this deficiency had been indicated in the speech of the Surveyor General of Ordnance. He had stated, in addition to other matters connected with the Service, that the drivers of waggons were not sufficiently trained. He had admitted, in the most palpable manner, that a re-organization of the Department was judged to be necessary. He said that certain deficiencies had been considered, and that a Committee had been appointed by the War Office to inquire into these deficiencies. Not content with that, however, the hon. Gentleman, much to his surprise, granted almost all that was asked in the Motion of the hon. Member who had brought the subject under the notice of the House. In his opinion, that showed how his hon. Friend and the Secretary of State for War were open to the influence of opinion, and that they saw a strong feeling existed in the House of Commons that an inquiry was necessary. He was not opposed to granting a Committee under the circumstances. He thought it would have a certain good result in calming the feelings of the public on the matter; but whether it would result eventually in any great change being introduced he, from his official experience, very much doubted. He had seen a great number of Committees and Commissions with respect to our Military Service; and the result had been, as a rule, that although the Committees had expended a great deal of time and labour in collecting much valuable information for the use of the Secretary of State for War, the advice of those Committees had not been followed generally, and very often it had been departed from. There was a recent case in point. A Commission was appointed not long ago to inquire into the whole system of recruiting. It was commonly known as Lord Airey's Commission. That Commission made an exhaustive inquiry into the whole subject, and after their labours had been completed they offered a large number of recommendations. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then, he believed, Secretary of State for War, had hardly followed a single recommendation of that Committee. This fact, he thought, showed that, although they might multiply Committees and Commissions, they did not necessarily insure the efficiency of the Service. He would much rather, under present circumstances, trust to the pressure of public opinion in keeping the Executive up to their duties, and in insisting that the Executive should take the House thoroughly into their confidence as to what was necessary to be done. The Executive should also not be afraid to come forward and ask for money where money was required. A great deal of complaint had been made with regard to waggons. There had been an error made in sending out to Egypt large, heavy waggons, which, as they had been told, stuck in the sand. If they had a sufficient number of trained officers who at any moment could be sent into the localities, which were well known, where the best baggage animals might be purchased as speedily as possible, there would be little difficulty—provided the Government knew their minds and their policy—in finding a sufficient supply of transport and animals necessary for the small Armies sent abroad by this country. A remark had been made with regard to the change that had taken place in the military character of the Commissariat and Transport. It was true that that military character was given to the Service after a great deal of consideration in 1878. The Successors of the Conservative Government had approved that military character, which was done on the advice of the Military Department. The great difficulty, however, was to find a sufficient number of officers who would undertake these appointments. The officers were naturally anxious to stay with their regiments in time of war, and to take a share of the fighting if any was taking place. Difficulty was experienced in getting the officer who was temporarily appointed to the Commissariat to stay with the Commissariat instead of going to the front. The Conservative Government dealt with the difficulty to a certain extent by insisting that officers should have a temporary appointment on probation. Now, however, he understood from his hon. Friend opposite that the officers were never permanently appointed. If that was so, a change had been made upon the scheme as originally introduced. The idea of the originators of this change was that competent young officers of a few years' standing should come into the Department, and after a proper amount of probation—say of three, four, or five years—they were then confirmed in their appointments.

Mr. BRAND here interposed, and was understood to say that the temporary appointment of these officers, as stated by the noble Lord, was not correct.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL said, he was glad to hear that that was not the case. A remark had been made—he thought by the Mover of the Resolution, to the effect that he had expressed an opinion that no censure attached to the Commissariat officers, but that it was rather applicable to persons in the highest quarters. He certainly made a remark of that kind. He thought that the Commissariat officers were unjustly blamed, and that the General Officer commanding was really the person responsible. It would be remembered that Questions were asked at the time by Members sitting on that side of the House, displaying some alarm at the fact that several Chiefs of Departments in the War Office had been appointed to commands in Egypt, and were allowed, nevertheless, to retain their appointments in the War Office. The Surveyor General of Ordnance, Sir John Adye, for instance, was appointed Chief of the Staff in Egypt, and his Office here was put in commission. He had very able officials under him at the War Office, and these all did their duty to the best of their ability under circumstances of considerable pressure; but the inconvenience of such an arrangement was manifest, and if we had been engaged in such a war as that in the Crimea, instead of being at war in Egypt, the consequences might have been serious.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Lord EUSTACE CECIL, resuming, said, he was endeavouring to point out the inconvenience of officers of high position in the War Office being given commands in the field and being allowed to retain their posts at home. This threw a considerable amount of extra work on the Departmental officers that remained at home, and a great pressure of work fell on the Secretary of State for War. In these observations he had no desire to reflect on any individuals. He believed that one and all did their duty thoroughly, and laboured in a way seldom surpassed. It would be remembered that in the case of one ship that was sent out to Egypt with stores, everything was found to be at the bottom that ought to have been at the top, and everything at the top that ought to have been at the bottom. In order to avoid contingencies and accidents of that kind, which sometimes occurred owing to the want of proper supervision, it might be well if a supercargo was put on board each ship going out with provisions to the seat of war, who would be able to point out where everything was packed. He hoped that the Secretary of State for War and the officials of the War Office were alive to the state of things, and that they were doing something towards remedying the defects that existed. The hon. Member who introduced this Motion had brought a large number of important facts to the attention of the House ; and the result of making these public would, he hoped, lead to their being thoroughly inquired into by the Government. The hon. Member had good reason for being satisfied with the result of his Motion, which, it might reasonably be hoped, might lead to increased efficiency in the Public Service.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON expressed his gratification at the fact that the Government had consented to appoint a Select Committee.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he must congratulate the hon. Member for Glasgow on the success which had attended his Motion. He hoped the Committee would make an inquiry into the conditions which attended Army medical transport. They knew that the difficulties which attended the Army medical transport in Egypt were almost entirely due to the fact that that transport was diverted to other purposes. He held a very strong opinion that the Department would never work well in time of war until it had a separate and inalienable transport of its own. He would like to ask the Surveyor General of Ordnance whether that very important question would be taken into consideration by the Committee?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that if the Committee was to be productive of good, it would be desirable that the inquiry should be devoted to very definite and, at the same time, limited objects. He did not think that a Committee, wandering over the whole sphere of the operations in Egypt, and going into controversies which were more or less discussed by Lord Morley's Committee on a previous occasion, would be likely to be productive of much good. He did not deny that some good might come from an inquiry directed to the object of obtaining the results of the latest experience as to the working of their system of transport in the field. The medical transport, of course, formed a part of the transport of the Army, and could not be separated from it; and anything of that nature would, he conceived, come strictly within the terms of the Reference to the Committee. In granting that Committee, he hoped it would be very distinctly understood that they did not at all assent to the accuracy of a great many of the statements which were made impugning the working of the administrative Department in the recent campaign in Egypt. Still less did they admit that anything whatever had been proved as to any shortcoming on the part of individuals. All he understood to be alleged was that there were defects in the system which might be improved, and if the Committee could point these out it would have done a very great service. He thought the most convenient course on this occasion would be for the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) to withdraw the Motion he had made, and to move it in the amended form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British Army in the recent Egyptian Campaign, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services,"—(*Dr. Cameron,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British Army in the recent Egyptian Campaign, and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PATRONAGE).

RESOLUTION.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND, in rising to call attention to the recent appointments to Official Receiverships in Bankruptcy; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which the patronage conferred on the President of the Board of Trade by the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 has been exercised by him,"

said, he could assure the House that it was with a deep sense of responsibility that he rose to move the Resolution; and nothing but a sense of duty would have persuaded him to do so, as it was practically a Vote of Censure on one of the Ministers of the Crown. He trusted, however, that he would be able to convince the House of the necessity of appointing a Committee to inquire into this matter. While the Bankruptcy Bill was in Committee a great deal of anxiety had been expressed as to the danger of giving to a Minister the large and extensive patronage conferred by that Bill. The question was brought forward over and over again, and every time an assurance was given that it should not in any way be used unfairly. Unfortunately, the proceedings in the Standing Committee were not reported, so he could only state what he knew as a Member of the Standing Committee to which that Bill was referred. But the matter came again before the House; and the President of the Board of Trade, in the course of the debate upon the Report, on the 14th of August, 1883, said, speaking after the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets—

> "He agreed with the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Ritchie) that if the Bill was to be a success, that result would be obtained entirely in consequence of the choice which would be made, in the first instance especially, of the officials who were to carry it into effect; and he could not conceive any policy on his part more suicidal than to allow Party feeling to influence him to such an extent as to prevent him appointing the best men."

Again, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "He proposed, in the first instance, to make a rough selection, and then to refer the matter to a Departmental Committee, and, to a large extent, found his action upon the recommendations of that Committee. Although he should reserve to himself some control, he hoped to avoid any suspicion of anything like improper Party considerations entering into the selections of the officials."—(3 *Hansard*, [283] 525.)

He (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had, therefore, to ask the House whether the facts which existed at present were in accordance with that pledge? A general feeling had existed during the Recess in the country that the posts were being filled up in such a way as to further Party ends, and that they were given away as rewards to strong partizans; and on a former occasion he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was true that out of 67 appointments 51 had been conferred on Liberals, 13 of whom were election agents; and whether he considered that a fulfilment of the pledge he had given to the House? To that Question he received the most extraordinary answer ever given in the House, for, in the first place, the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to shield himself behind a Committee of his own appointment; and, in the second place, said he had fully carried out the pledge given to the House. He was, however, bound to admit, and to apologize to the right hon. Gentleman for it, that his Question was not strictly correct. The real facts were that for the 67 appointments 51 Liberals were selected, 19 of whom, instead of 13, were election agents. Of these 19 four were agents of the present Ministers of the Crown. Did the House, then, consider the assurance given by the right hon. Gentleman had been fully carried out? Even if that Committee had been an independent one, the right hon. Gentleman could not shield himself from responsibility, and still less when that Committee was of his own appointment. But what was the composition of that Departmental Committee? Two of its Members, Mr. Giffen and Mr. Stoneham, were permanent officials of the Board of Trade, with whom the right hon. Gentleman had been in daily communication for three or four years, and one of them had been rewarded for his services by the appointment of his own son as an official receiver. The other two Members of the Committee were Mr. Harding and Mr. Smith—the one a Conservative and the other a Liberal. He agreed that those were two good appointments; but both these gentlemen were at the time under a deep debt of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman, and therefore they would naturally be only too glad to reciprocate the kindness by falling in with his views. He thought that was common sense. But could such a Committee, he asked, be called independent? It would not be a satisfactory answer if the President of the Board of Trade were to say that he did not know the politics of the candidates for the post of official receiver, because, having given a pledge that he would take care that the appointments should not be affected by political considerations, it was his business to make himself acquainted with the politics of the candidates, so as to make sure that his pledge should not be disregarded. Either the right hon. Gentleman had been careless about the appointments which were made, or he had been false to the pledges which he had given. There was no doubt somebody had been extremely well informed as to the politics of the gentlemen appointed. Could it be believed that out of 1,900 applications for 67 appointments 51 of them should fall to Liberals, 19 of whom were Liberal agents? No man in his senses would believe so. He knew that in many cases persons who recommended candidates were asked what were the politics of their nominees. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Name!"] Gentlemen who came before the Departmental Committee were positively asked the question, though they were told that it was of no consequence. [*Cries of* "Name!"] He would give the names by-and-bye. He held that if the matter were investigated by a Committee it would be found that the appointments which had been made constituted a very grotesque commentary upon the promises made to Parliament. The President of the Board of Trade said the appointments were submitted to the local Chambers of Commerce where they existed. He (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) did not know what took place in every case; but in many instances what was done was this. A letter was sent stating that Mr. So-and-So had been appointed, and asking whether there was any objection to the appointment. But was it to be expected that any Chamber, after an appointment had been made, would perform the invidious task of registering objections to the appointment? Many Chambers acted with a due sense of their own dignity, and refused to say whether they approved or disapproved of the selections that had been made. Why were not the names of all the candidates submitted to the local Chambers of Commerce before the appointments were made? They would then have had an opportunity of recommending the best men. Had that course been followed, a very different class of men would have been appointed in the place of the motley crew of chemists, tailors, and drapers who were now official receivers. He would give the House a few instances to show the necessity for the appointment of a Select Committee. In the borough of Ipswich a person named Messent was appointed. He was at one time so successful in business as a tailor in Birmingham that he was obliged to ask for the indulgence of his creditors; but he belonged to the Birmingham Eight Hundred. Soon after the return of the present senior Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) Mr. Messent went to that town, giving up his flourishing business in Birmingham, and he was then made an official receiver. Was not that a political appointment, and could that be called the appointment of the best possible man? At York, where a contested election was fought in the Recess, a draper named Wilkinson acted as the agent of Mr. Lockwood, the Liberal candidate, his services being given almost gratuitously. The result was that after the election Mr. Wilkinson was rewarded by being made Receiver in Bankruptcy for the City of York. From that city came up four candidates of the highest standing, one a Doctor of Civil Law at the University of Oxford and a Liberal; but he had not done the service of Mr. Wilkinson, and consequently his qualifications were overlooked. The next case to which he (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) would ask the attention of the House was that of the City of Hereford. A Petition was presented to the House against the return of the two Members who had been returned; but that was at the last moment withdrawn, and an agreement, which he held in his hand, was drawn up. This agreement was to the effect that one of the sitting Members should apply for and accept the Chiltern Hundreds before Easter, 1882; that the vacancy should be filled up by the unopposed return of a Conservative; that thenceforward each Party should have one Member to the end of the present Parliament; and that at the next General Election each Party should only nominate one candidate. That agreement was signed on behalf of the Liberals, amongst others, by Mr. Scobie, who, having taken so prominent a part in these proceedings, was appointed Official Receiver for the City of Hereford.

There could be no doubt about his being a strong Party man, and it was on that account that he had obtained this appointment. Then, at Taunton, the Attorney General's confidential agent who kept his canvass book had been appointed official receiver; and at Sheffield the gentleman appointed was the election agent of the President of the Board of Trade himself when that right hon. Gentleman contested Sheffield in 1874. In Oxford the gentleman whose name was mentioned in the Election Petition which was to be found in the Library of the House, and who was one of the Home Secretary's agents at that time, was selected for the office. It appeared to him that the Home Secretary's agents had had more than their fair share of the plunder, because when he turned to Derby he found that the election agent of the right hon. and learned Gentleman there was also appointed to the official receivership of that city. He held that the appointments which he had brought to the notice of the House presented a *primâ facie* case for the appointment of the Committee for which he asked. The appointment of a Committee would give the President of the Board of Trade an opportunity of explaining away the charges, which were generally felt to be true. It was usual to grant Commissions which were asked for upon subjects in which the conduct of Ministers of the Crown was impugned, and as statesmanship should always show a subjection of political partizanship to the interests of the State he trusted the Government would not oppose his Motion. The rewards given after successful election campaigns by political Parties had done more than anything else to corrupt political life in the United States. It would be a bad day for England when the cry of "Spoils to the victor" became a Party watchword. Believing that the Liberal Party had done more in this matter to corrupt our political life than anything against which the Corrupt Practices Act was directed, he begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Mr. TOMLINSON seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which the patronage conferred on the President of the Board of Trade by the Bankruptcy Act of 1883, has been exercised by him,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. M'INTYRE said, he was quite certain that neither Her Majesty's Government nor the President of the Board of Trade would have anything to fear if this Committee were granted; but he was surprised that while the hon. Member had travelled over the whole of England he had carefully abstained from going into the county in which the borough which he represented was situated. If he had done so he would have found that the persons who were most opposed to the Government were those who had received the appointments. The hon. Member must have known that the gentleman, able as he was, appointed for Worcester and the district around, was one who had denounced Her Majesty's Government on every possible occasion. [*A laugh.*] The late Home Secretary might jeer at him; but he could not alter the fact, and the fact was that the best men had been selected by Her Majesty's Government without reference to politics. If the right hon. Gentleman would look fairly at all the appointments, he would see whether a man was a tailor or a confectioner, one, at all events, who was able to do the work had been selected, without reference to politics at all. It was remarkable that where the hon. Gentleman must have had local knowledge and experience he had abstained from impugning the appointments, but had gone far away, where his information must have been given by prejudiced persons. The hon. Member, therefore, depended upon hearsay evidence. He would oppose the Resolution of the hon. Member, and he hoped the House would acknowledge that the President of the Board of Trade had been actuated by the purest motives, and had selected the best men according to the evidence brought before him.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he had hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would have risen at once to meet the grave charges that had been brought forward, and he did not think that the hon. Member who had just spoken had at all mended the case. The hon.

Member had dwelt very much upon the City of Worcester. But the charge was not that in some solitary instances Conservatives had been appointed, but that 19 official receivers were actual Liberal election agents, and 13 were election agents of Liberal Members, and that four were election agents of Members of the Cabinet. That charge was a most serious one, because these gentlemen had been appointed to carry out a most important Act; but there were rumours throughout the country that the Act had not been carried into effect successfully. [*Cries of* "No!"] Rumours to that effect were continually reaching him from Liverpool and from other parts of the country. The success of the Act would depend very much on those who occupied this position. He was one of those who were very anxious to carry the measure through the House, and he did attach considerable importance to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that it would be fatal to its success if it should ever be supposed that in making appointments the Minister of the Crown should have been actuated by Party motives. Not only Gentlemen on that side, but Gentlemen on the other side also, must have been surprised to hear that 51 out of 67 of the persons appointed belonged to the Liberal Party. He had rarely heard such a grave charge made against a Minister of the Crown, and it was one of those charges which ought to be met at once. If the Departmental Committee had deceived the right hon. Gentleman because he said he made the appointments in consequence of the Reports of that Committee, they had ill performed their duty to the House and the country in thus exposing the right hon. Gentleman to the grave charges which had been brought against him. The right hon. Gentleman might say that he had the confidence of the Chambers of Commerce; but his hon. Friend (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had explained what that meant. The same line of argument was adopted some time since by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Dodson). That right hon. Gentleman made certain gentlemen, all Liberals, Justices of the Peace, and then submitted their names to the Council of the Corporation of Liverpool to pronounce judgment upon them. The Council of the Corporation, however, he was proud to say, stated that they always considered the appointments of Justices no Party question, and declined to pass any judgment on the names submitted. If it was to be assumed that the Minister of the day could manipulate Acts of Parliament for the benefit of a political Party there would cease to be that confidence in the persons appointed to carry out the Acts which had hitherto been reposed in them. The observations of the hon. Member for Worcester (Mr. M'Intyre) were utterly beside the question. It was no answer to say that a Conservative had been appointed. The charge was—and it was a very serious charge—that the Government had appointed as official receivers several election agents on the Liberal side, but had not appointed a single Conservative election agent. He did not mean to say that a tailor or draper might not be competent. What he did say was that many men might be appointed who were far above all suspicion. He should have expected that the hon. Member for Worcester, in his desire to exculpate the right hon. Gentleman, would have said that these charges were utterly without foundation, and therefore would have supported the Resolution of his hon. Friend. But the hon. Member did nothing of the sort, but limited himself very wisely to one place of which he had a knowledge. His hon. Friend admitted that 16 of those appointed might be classed as Members of the Conservative Party; but his charge was that many persons were appointed who were not entitled by their former position to occupy a very important office, and that they were so appointed because they were members of the political Party opposite. He would have thought that instead of those who had been referred to, it would have been possible to select men of high position as accountants or solicitors to act as official receiver—men who would have been above the suspicions and charges which had been brought forward by his hon. Friend. Hon. Members who took exception to these appointments spoke not as Members of a political Party. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] He, at all events, spoke as the Representative of a great commercial City—a City upon which the Bankruptcy Act would have a most important influence—and he maintained that whether the Bankruptcy Act was to be successful or not depended very much upon the character of the official receivers, and that the charges brought forward that night, unless disproved, would do much to lead the commercial community to believe that sufficient confidence was not to be placed in those gentlemen. He felt that very little confidence could be placed in some of these official receivers, which would do very much to spoil that legislation upon which so much time was spent last year. He had great pleasure in supporting the Resolution; but he did so not in the interests of Party, but in the interests of the country and the commercial classes.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down complained that he did not rise immediately after the speech of the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland); but he would bear in mind, and the House would bear in mind, that this was an impeachment of an individual. There was only one person in the House, he was sorry to say, who was in a position to make a reply to the charges brought forward by the two hon. Gentlemen who had spoken, and to other hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who might be prepared to speak. He thought it was, therefore, natural that he should show some little hesitation in rising too early, and until he had heard what was the full case against him. He must say that if hon. Members on the other side were animated by the spirit just shown by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), he had very little reason to hope that anything he might say would have the slightest effect upon them. The hon. Member for Liverpool had said that whatever the President of the Board of Trade might say he had made up his mind that the Bankruptcy Act was not likely to produce any satisfactory results. The hon. Member also said that this was a very serious charge. It was a very serious charge; but the sense in which he felt it to be serious was that it was a charge made against men to whom had been intrusted the administration of the Bankruptcy Act throughout the country. If it were a fact that he had misused the powers intrusted to him, and that he had appointed bad men, then, of course, the Bankruptcy Act would be a failure; and the charge was that he had appointed bad men. The charge was not that he had appointed a number of Liberals; but that the men appointed, whether Liberals or Conservatives, were not the best men that could have been appointed. While these men were endeavouring to gain the confidence of the commercial classes, hon. Members had come forward and condemned them, without knowledge, as absolutely unfit to undertake the work with which they had been intrusted. That was the serious part of the charge. He did not entertain the pessimist view of the operation of the Bankruptcy Act which he was sorry to see was entertained by the hon. Member for Liverpool. All the information he had received on the subject went to show that the Act was working most admirably, to a degree altogether beyond his most sanguine anticipations. The average number of bankruptcies under the old system varied from 10,000 to 15,000 a-year; and in all the calculations of the Board of Trade with respect to the working of the new Act, they assumed that the number would be reduced to 9,000 a-year. As a matter of fact, the number for the two months past averaged less than 3,000 a-year. He had obtained the opinions of various persons in a position to judge of the working of the Act. The answer he had received from one of the Judges with reference to the cause of this extraordinary reduction was that it was "no longer an advantage to a dishonest debtor to become a bankrupt." One of the County Court Judges gave the opinions of several of his colleagues—gentlemen who were impartial in this matter. One, at least, of those gentlemen was a Conservative, and his opinion, he thought, would be considered important. The first gentleman whose opinion was quoted was the Judge of the Halifax, Dewsbury, and Huddersfield district. He stated that the Act was working admirably so far; that "fraud was nipped in the bud, instead of being allowed to fall into the sere." The County Court Judge of the Hull district bore similar testimony. Mr. Mottram, the County Court Judge of Birmingham, who was opposed to himself (Mr. Chamberlain) in politics, said that he anticipated before the Act was passed that it would work well as far as Birmingham was concerned. He had never faltered in that opinion, and he was now more than ever confirmed in it. The Judge of the Sheffield County Court—one of the Courts referred to by the hon. Member for Evesham—said that attempts had been made in various quarters to discredit the Bankruptcy Act; but he saw no reason to apprehend anything else than that we should have a successful Bankruptcy Act for the first time. He had mentioned these instances to the House to show that the rumours to which the hon. Member for Liverpool had referred had no foundation in fact. The charge in regard to these appointments had been described as a serious one; but it would appear that the hon. Member who brought it forward did not think so, because, when an attempt was made an hour ago to count out the House, he walked out behind the Speaker's Chair, instead of waiting for the purpose of helping to form a quorum. The charge was a serious one, and he regarded it as such. The hon. Member based the charge on this—that he, having pledged himself that he would endeavour in every case to secure the best man for the post of official receiver throughout the country, had been swayed in these appointments entirely by political considerations, and had appointed, out of 67 official receivers, 51 Liberals, of whom 19 had been agents for the Liberal Party. How did the hon. Gentleman know that? What authority had he for that charge except an anonymous letter in *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph?* He (Mr. Chamberlain) was totally unable to answer the charge, because he did not know the political opinions of the great majority of the men whom he had appointed. He could not say whether it was true that he had appointed 51 Liberals or 51 Tories, because he did not know. But he asked the hon. Gentleman who brought this serious charge and impeached the conduct of a Minister of the Crown, what authority he had? What right had the hon. Member to come to the House and state as a matter of fact that 51 out of these gentlemen were Liberals? The course he took in carrying out his pledge to the House that in making these appointments he would endeavour to secure the best men was this—he had told the House that he intended to make a sort of preliminary selection, and then refer the matter to a Committee. He found the applications so numerous that it was absolutely impossible for him with any success to make any kind of selection, and he abandoned the idea altogether of a personal selection, or even of reading the vast number of testimonials which came to him. What he did was to make at once, on his own responsibility, four or five appointments. The first was that of the Official Receiver of London—Mr. Harding—who was doing his work admirably, to the entire satisfaction, he believed, of the commercial community of London. At the time he made that appointment he did not know Mr. Harding's political opinions. He had heard since that he was a Conservative. He did not know that Mr. Harding was a Conservative at the time, and he was very sorry subsequently to find that he was one. The best appointment, valued at £2,000 a-year, had, therefore, been given to a Conservative. The second appointment was that of the Inspector General in Bankruptcy—Mr. Smith, who was well known to everybody who had taken the slightest interest in this subject, as having had a larger acquaintance with bankruptcy practice and Bankruptcy Law than any other commercial man. Mr. Smith had also been managing director of one of the London banks. When that gentleman was appointed he knew nothing of his political opinions. As a matter of fact, Mr. Smith was a Liberal, and he was glad to hear it. The third appointment was that of the Official Receiver for Birmingham. During the preparation of the Bill, among other gentlemen he saw Mr. Luke Sharpe, who gave him most valuable information upon the subject. That gentleman had a most extensive practice, and he was very much impressed with his shrewdness and ability. He determined to offer him the appointment, and he would frankly tell the House that he wrote to a friend in Birmingham asking him what were Mr. Sharpe's politics, and was told that he was a Conservative. He was very sorry, but still offered him the appointment; and, as a matter of fact, he had been appointed on his merits alone. He made two other appointments of gentlemen who were officials under the old Bankruptcy Act, and whose politics he did not know even now. He had told the House the whole of the personal part that he took. Having made these five or six appointments, he then asked a Departmental Committee to deal with the subject, and this Departmental Committee consisted of gentlemen who would be hereafter responsible for the administration of the Act. Two of them were—Mr. Giffen, who was at the head of the Commercial Department of the Board of Trade; and Mr. Stoneham, at the head of the Financial Department of the Board of Trade, in whose office would be vested the management of all the financial part of the administration of the Bankruptcy Act, the control and audit of accounts, and so on. The other two were Mr. Harding, the Chief Official Receiver, and Mr. John Smith, the Inspector General in Bankruptcy, one of whom would have the control of receivers in the Metropolitan district, and the other the control of receivers in the country. Was it possible he could have appointed gentlemen who had more interest in getting good men? He protested against the attack made upon this Committee, and especially against the imputation that they would be influenced by improper motives, and likely to pander to the supposed improper propensities of their official Chief. The credit of the permanent Civil Service of the Crown was really a matter of national concern. Whatever might be the case in the United States, with which the hon. Member appeared to be familiar, there had never been any imputation cast upon the honour of the members of our Civil Service, who discharged their duties without regard to politics. Having appointed this Committee, he thought it right to trust them, and he handed over to them the applications and testimonials, and asked them to prepare a scheme for dealing with them. The method they adopted had been described in a Report which had been laid before the House. In their Report these gentlemen said—

> "In the papers before the Committee there were no recommendations of the candidates on political grounds or referring to their political opinions, and in prosecuting their inquiries, they took care to have regard solely to the fitness, qualifications, and characters of the candidates before them. They relied chiefly on inquiries made of neutral persons occupying responsible positions in each district, and did not think it any part of their duty to inquire into the political opinions of the candidates. The Committee were thus entirely unacquainted with the politics of the candidates selected, and this ignorance continued during the subsequent proceedings, except in one or two instances, where the candidates themselves inadvertently referred to their politics. ['Oh!' *and laughter.*] Such reference, of course, received no attention from the Committee."

He could not understand the meaning of that laughter. It was perfectly natural that some would think of recommending themselves by declaring their politics; it was also certain that some, from a scrupulous sense of honour, thought that they were bound to declare their politics when they were opposed to the Government. He had one or two such instances brought to his knowledge by letters addressed to him privately. The Committee distinctly said that whatever statements were made they were put aside, and such statements did not influence the selections, which were made solely with regard to merit. The Committee went on to state, what was the fact, that in every case he accepted their recommendation. He might stop there, simply showing that he had taken every precaution he could to secure the best men. But he was not satisfied with that. He felt that in dealing with this vast number of applications from strangers to himself and the Committee, it was possible to fall into traps, and mistakes might be made; a man might have been a bankrupt, or made a composition, and that would be a disqualification. He, therefore, asked the Committee in every case to communicate with some public official or body—as County Court Judge, Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Agriculture, or Town Council—asking whether the proposed appointment was approved of. To have laid before these the full list of candidates would have been to have evaded any responsibility for the making of the appointments, and Parliament had thrown upon him and upon his Department the duty of making the selection. In the vast majority of cases no objection was raised to the appointments. In two or three cases public bodies either declined to give an opinion, or expressed a preference for another candidate. In these few cases he impressed upon the Committee the necessity of making further inquiry; and they did not rest until they had satisfied themselves by the fullest inquiry they were able to make in the locality that the appointment was not fairly questionable. In all cases, the further inquiries justified the original recommendation, which was accordingly acted upon. Having stated the general principles on which they proceeded, here he might fairly stop. It was specially difficult for him, in the circumstances, to go into individual cases. When the Notice of Motion appeared upon the Paper he caused a letter to be written to the hon. Member to say that if it was his intention to bring particular cases before the House, it would be convenient if he would furnish the names beforehand, in order that he might refer to the Departmental Committee for information. After the lapse of some time, the hon. Member wrote to say it was his intention to question the appointment of political agents. Another letter was sent to him to say that the President of the Board of Trade did not know who were political agents and asking for the names. To that letter there was no reply.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he only received the letter that morning.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was much surprised at that; he thought it was sent out two or three days ago.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he believed that that was so; but, being out of town, he did not receive it till this morning.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the original application was sent two or three weeks ago; but no reply was received till three days ago. Another letter was sent immediately, and the list of names could have been furnished even that morning—if it had been, he could have been prepared with a fuller statement. But it appeared that the hon. Member was more anxious to make a charge on anonymous information than to obtain accurate information. The hon. Member said that Mr. Messent, who had been appointed at Ipswich, had been a tailor, and had had to ask for the indulgence of his creditors. He should like to know upon what authority the hon. Member made that statement. The Committee laid it down, with his full approval, that, as a general rule, no man should be appointed who had been in such a position; he believed that in every case a direct question was put to the candidate himself; if an appointment had been made under a misapprehension in this respect he would reconsider it; and unless the hon. Member was prepared to make the assertion as to the one case on his own knowledge, he must say that he did not believe the statement. A strong case of alleged political duplicity was that of York; it was said that the gentleman appointed was the agent of the Liberal Party; he dare say that was true; but, so far from having been anxious to make this political appointment, he did all he could to put York in the same district with Scarborough, and he protested against a separate appointment; but this aroused so much local feeling from both Liberals and Conservatives, that he was compelled to yield in order to secure the smooth working of the Act. The gentleman appointed might have been a draper, but he was now studying for the Bar. There was every reason to believe that he was a fit person to hold the appointment. Then the hon. Member referred to the case of Hereford. He knew nothing about it, nor did he understand what was the *gravamen* of the charge. At Taunton it was alleged that the agent of the Attorney General had been appointed. On that he would only say that another rule laid down was that, although the fact that a man had been an agent for a political Party was not to be held to exclude him from being appointed as an official receiver, it was made a condition in every case that the person appointed was to abandon all political appointments. His hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General gave him the information, which, thanks to the neglect of the hon. Member for Evesham in not furnishing him with the ground of his attack, he had not before—that that gentleman was not his election agent at all, and that he was the Deputy Registrar of the County Court. *Ex uno disce omnes.* The House might judge of that tremendous impeachment of the hon. Member for Evesham from that one case, which they were fortunately able to bring to a conclusion. But he thought it highly probable—inasmuch as the great majority of these appointments had been from solicitors—that they had been political agents on both sides. [*A laugh.*] He did not say the same men had acted for both sides. What he meant was that in those country towns they could hardly find any solicitor holding a prominent position and fitted for such work as they proposed to intrust to him who had not at some time or other been a political agent either for Conservatives or Liberals. Then the hon. Member said that at Sheffield he (Mr. Chamberlain) appointed a gentleman who was his political agent when he was a candidate for that borough. Now, he did know something about the case of Sheffield, because it was brought prominently to his knowledge by the fact that the Chamber of Commerce of Sheffield objected to the nomination that was submitted to their consideration. The gentleman appointed there was Mr. Clegg. When he was candidate at Sheffield his political agent was Mr. Herbert Bramley, who had since been a political agent for the other side. Subsequently, in the course of the election, his candidature was united with that of his right hon. Friend, and that nominal connection—for it was really little more than that—had escaped his memory, and when Mr. Clegg's name was put before him he did not recognize the fact that that gentleman had been his agent in conjunction with Mr. Herbert Bramley. Mr. Clegg had been originally selected as a gentleman who was in every way qualified to fulfil the appointment given to him; and all the information since received from local sources showed that, if not the very best, he was a very good candidate for the office. The other day there was brought to him the completion of a case under the new Bankruptcy Act, and it so happened that that first bird fell to the gun of Mr. Clegg. He had been able to wind up that bankrupt estate under the new Act, and had paid 20*s.* in the pound with a very moderate percentage of expenses. If that experience was general they would have no reason to complain of the operation of the Bankruptcy Act. Then the case of Oxford had been attacked. It was very similar to that of York. The Committee recommended that Oxford should be attached to another district. Originally it was proposed that an official receiver for Banbury and Oxford should be appointed, and the person to whom it was first offered happened to be a resident in Banbury. He declined, and they were obliged to take the person who had since been appointed, who, he believed, was perfectly qualified for the post, and who might have originally been—although he knew nothing of it—the agent of the Liberal Party. But it was impossible to allege that that was an instance of political corruption, because it was the original intention to appoint a Banbury and not an Oxford man. He had now gone through the individual cases as well as he could at short notice, and without the special information which common courtesy would have suggested that the hon. Member for Evesham should have afforded him. He had also stated to the House the general principles on which he had proceeded; and he submitted to the House that there was not the remotest shadow of a case for the charge which had been brought against him.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he regretted the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), who had opposed the second reading of the Bankruptcy Bill. [*Interruption.*] He must suggest that the hon. Member for Stockton should behave himself. It was disorderly for the hon. Member to interrupt a Member who was addressing the House. He had made no observations of an offensive character; and, therefore, it was not too much to ask the hon. Member for Stockton to restrain himself. His hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire had opposed the Bankruptcy Bill on the second reading on the very ground that it would put an undue amount of patronage into the hands of the Government; and the President of the Board of Trade met that objection in a straightforward manner by giving the assurance that the best men should be appointed irrespective of their political opinions. Now, the facts which the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had brought forward that hon. Member said he could substantiate before a Committee. ["No!"] He asked for a Committee; and who was most likely to be in the right, he who sought for an inquiry or those who refused it? The hon. Member said he could produce witnesses and evidence that he believed to be incontrovertible, and he denied that he had accepted any anonymous statements. The hon. Member said that out of 67 appointments 51 were given to Liberals. He did not attach much importance to that fact if it was one, because he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that it was impossible for anyone in his place to know the political opinions of every individual who was appointed. But the *gravamen* of the charge was that 19 out of the 51 were Liberal political agents.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: How many were Tories?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he understood that there were only 16 Tories appointed in all.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: How many are agents?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, there might have been some, but he knew nothing about that. What his hon. Friend asserted was that 19 out of the 51 Liberals appointed were election agents. If that was so the defence of the President of the Board of Trade failed. It was simply absurd to suppose that so high a proportion as that fact implied of the whole available talent for the discharge of these official duties under the Bankruptcy Act could only be found in the ranks of the Liberal election agents; and if his hon. Friend's statement was correct it was strong *primâ facie* ground for inquiry. He dared say that the President of the Board of Trade had adopted the steps which he thought adequate to carry out the solemn pledge he had given to the House in regard to the exercise of that patronage; but the right hon. Gentleman could not take shelter behind a Departmental Committee, and if the pledge which he had given had unfortunately been broken the right hon. Gentleman must be held responsible. Let them dismiss from their minds all animus in the matter, and let them look at the Ipswich case. There was a gentleman who had been a tailor at Birmingham, who had not been very fortunate in his business, and yet who had, on the recommendation of Mr. Jesse Collings, who was at once Member for Ipswich and a prominent member of the Caucus, been appointed to that town, with which he had no connection whatever.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. Mr. Messent is now resident in Ipswich. It was represented to me that Mr. Messent was a gentleman living upon his means in Ipswich at the time of his appointment. I do not believe the statement that he has compounded with his creditors.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that what he understood his right hon. Friend to assert was that Mr. Messent spent a great part of his life in Birmingham. If it was true that this Birmingham tailor became connected with Ipswich through the hon. Member for Ipswich, might they not arrive at the conclusion that he was appointed simply because Mr. Collings happened to be Member for that town? Then, again, let them take the case of the appointment in York. The President of the Board of Trade said he had not wished to make the appointment; he had thought it unnecessary, but he had yielded, and had appointed a gentleman who had almost gratuitously discharged the duties of a Liberal agent. It was evident that that gentleman had been appointed because he was a Liberal agent. Then there was the instance of Taunton. The Attorney General had denied that the gentleman was his election agent, but he had kept the canvass-books. All these were matters which ought to be cleared up. If the statements made by the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) were true, it was clear that the precautions taken concerning these appointments had been insufficient. There had always been a suspicion as to the manner in which this extensive patronage would be used, because the President of the Board of Trade was the head of the Caucus, an institution which had done so much to degrade the Civil Service in America. In America the great object of all reformers had been for years to dissociate the Civil Service from the electoral machines, and yet here they had placed an exceptional piece of patronage in the hands of a Minister who, by its means, placed persons who got it in an exceptional position to obtain information as to the affairs of other people. This patronage should have been conferred on persons who were free from suspicion, and not given to anyone for political services. Complaint had been made that sufficient information had not been given beforehand to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the charges made against the Department; but the House must bear in mind that these charges had been repeated over and over again in newspapers during the Recess. In *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph* there had appeared a detailed list of all the persons appointed and their antecedents, and the attention of the President of the Board of Trade must have been called to this, because he (Lord George Hamilton) had seen a letter written by the right hon.

Gentleman's secretary to the effect that the President of the Board of Trade declined to take any notice of the attack in the newspapers, but would be ready to defend himself in Parliament.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not know that the hon. Member was the mouthpiece of *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph.*

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, that the right hon. Gentleman did not know it even then; it was not the case, as the hon. Member for Evesham stood, so to speak, on his own bottom. At the same time, with the charges made publicly in the Press before him, the right hon. Gentleman was hardly justified in complaining of want of information. The hon. Member for Evesham had collected from various sources information which he considered justified the statements he had made. The charge made by the hon. Member had in no way been met by the President of the Board of Trade. If these statements of the hon. Member for Evesham were true, and the hon. Member was quite prepared to substantiate them, it was clear that the pledge made to the House had been broken, and they had a right to inquire how it was this came about, and all his hon. Friend asked was an opportunity of proving it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was willing to acquit hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite of any desire to make a Party or personal attack on the President of the Board of Trade; but some unpleasant language had been used that night, which ought to have been avoided. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) spoke on the authority of a newspaper—for no other authority had been given in that House—to induce the House to consider the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the conduct of a Minister of the Crown. Even in a criminal case there must be some *primâ facie* ground of the truth of the charge, and here some evidence must be given before asking for a Committee of Inquiry.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: I stated that I had investigated every case myself, and written 600 letters on the subject.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he could only have wished that the hon. Member had written 601, and that the last had been a letter to his right hon. Friend informing him of the charges he was going to make. What did the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex say? He had said that there had been a promise that these appointments should be made for no political causes, and then he had proceeded to admit that the right hon. Gentleman had delegated these appointments to a Committee; that they were the persons who made these appointments, and, therefore, they had misled the right hon. Gentleman. But of what politics were these men? Did the noble Lord suppose that they were not reasonably loyal to their office? But if that was true, these were the persons responsible for those appointments, although he admitted his right hon. Friend was responsible to the House. His right hon. Friend had omitted to state one matter. He had the power to make the appointment of every one of these 67 gentlemen for life, and, with the exception of eight of them, he had appointed them from year to year, so that they could be dismissed by his Successor at one year's notice. That was his right hon. Friend's individual action, and quite distinct from any obligation cast upon him. Let them not be mealy-mouthed. This was a charge of corruption against a Minister—and on what sort of evidence was it based? As regarded the case of Taunton, the legal political agent, who was one of the candidates, had not obtained the appointment, but the person who was Deputy Registrar of the County Court, and was recommended in the most earnest way by the County Court Judge, on account of his experience in dealing with bankruptcy cases, had been appointed. It was true that the gentleman in question had accompanied him on his canvass, but he was not in any way his agent. From first to last, until the hon. Gentleman had made the charge against his right hon. Friend and himself, no one human being had denied that that appointment was the very best that could be made. There was a time, perhaps, when political animosity got the better of that chivalry which was usual among men, and he feared that such was the case now; for when they heard the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex tell the House that he abhorred those who had anything to do with the Caucus, it was not difficult for hon. Members to trace the spirit in which these charges had been made—charges which, as he had said, had so utterly fallen to the ground.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman, when he gave his pledge to the House, must himself have felt that he never would have got the Bill passed unless the House had placed implicit confidence in that pledge. No one could deny that there had been a most uneasy feeling throughout the country—["No, no!"] —a very strong feeling, even among the Friends of the right hon. Gentleman—as to the way in which these appointments had been made. That was not to be wondered at when the results were looked at in broad figures; they were sufficient to warrant at least a suspicion in men's minds that that pledge had not been fairly fulfilled. Everyone had a right to expect, and did expect, that the particular officer of the Government who had charge of the appointments would see that pledge strictly and liberally carried out. At all events, the figures were quite sufficient to arouse public inquiry in the matter.

Mr. CAUSTON: Are they correct?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS remarked that they had not been denied by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CAUSTON: He does not know anything about it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the figures had not been revised by the right hon. Gentleman himself, but they had been stated to the House on the authority of a Member of the House, and, *primâ facie*, the authority and word of a Member was to be believed when he said he had made strict inquiries into a matter. What were the results of the figures? There were 67 appointments in all, 51 of whom were Liberals; 19 of the 51 were election agents, and four out of the 19 were election agents for Members of the present Government. It was for the honour and credit of the Government that this statement should be met, for if there was the smallest suspicion that this patronage had been wrongly used the country was entitled to inquire into it. The hon. Member who brought the matter forward said he would not mention more than six of the names of these gentlemen; and the right hon. Gentleman had said, in reply, that he ought to have had full knowledge of the names in the cases that were to be brought forward, in order that he might be enabled to answer. It was very remarkable, however, if the names were perfectly new to him, what an intimate knowledge the right hon. Gentleman displayed of the majority of them. Without referring at length to the cases in which these appointments had been made, he might refer to a few of them as typical of the rest. The first he would mention was that at Ipswich, where the gentleman appointed came from Birmingham, and was one of the 800 or 900, or whatever the number might be, who controlled the elections in that borough in the Liberal interest. This gentleman went down to Ipswich with the present senior Member for that constituency, and assisted in procuring his election. A few months later this gentleman was appointed Official Receiver for the district in which Ipswich was situate, and it was scarcely possible to doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was aware of his antecedents before the appointment was made. He was sure that hon. Members below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, who so recently cheered the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, were as strongly opposed as he could be to the perpetration of a job, and he asked them to bear in mind the facts which he had stated. It ought to be the highest object of this House to see to it that these and all other appointments in the Civil Service of the country were beyond suspicion, and that the Service should be maintained in a state of purity, which was its pride, and in which it transcended the similar Services in every country of the world. The next case was that of a draper who was appointed Official Receiver at York, and who was an active agent, acting on behalf of the Liberal candidate for that city—a fact which, if it was not within the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman before the appointment was made, might have been easily ascertained by him, and, being ascertained, ought to have had weight in the question of making the appointment. As far as this gentleman was concerned, it was admitted further that he was not the strongest among the candidates; and, even if he had been, it would surely have been better not to make a selection which could give rise to an idea that in future—no matter what Party might be in Office—political services were almost as a matter of course to be rewarded by appointments in the Civil Service. In the case of the appointment to Hereford, the gentleman selected for the office was not only a strong Liberal partizan, but he had also been party to a questionable compromise which was effected between the rival political sections in the case of an Election Petition which was presented and tried. Then, in the case of Taunton, the Official Receiver was a gentleman who had care of the canvass books of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, this was not so. The gentleman had not care of his canvass books, but accompanied him from house to house in his canvass, and was in no way responsible for the management of the contest.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was clear that if the gentleman was not an election agent, he at any rate assisted the hon. and learned Gentleman in his canvass. Then, again, it was admitted that the gentleman who was appointed at Sheffield had acted as an election agent; and in Oxford and Derby the appointees were gentlemen who had on occasion acted as the election agents of the right hon. and learned Gentleman who was now Secretary of State for the Home Department. When the hon. Member had shown that out of 67 gentlemen appointed 51 had been Liberals, of whom 19 had been Liberal electioneering agents, and four the agents of Members of the Government, he thought that a sufficient case had been made out for inquiry; and it was for the credit of the Government and of the right hon. Gentleman himself that some further answer should be given, because, without such answer, the country would not be satisfied.

MR. DODDS said, the general question had been so fully entered into by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that he should not have risen unless he had had some personal experience of the matter in dispute. The first of the cases alluded to in connection with these appointments was that of York. It had been said over and over again that Mr. Wilkinson had been the Liberal election agent for York; but that statement was an entire misrepresentation, and was not true. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Hon. Members might cry "Oh!" as much as they pleased; but he had not risen to say anything that he was not thoroughly acquainted with, and he was fully acquainted with all the details of the York appointment. There were residing at York a Liberal agent for that city and a Liberal agent for the North Riding of Yorkshire, but neither of them was Mr. Wilkinson. Mr. Wilkinson was a draper of the highest respectability in the City of York. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but there had been other respectable drapers in York, one of whom not very many years ago became a Member of that House, and a very distinguished member and ornament of society. He referred to the late George Hudson. Mr. Wilkinson was not an unworthy representative of the City of York; he had retired from business some time ago on a competency, and, having retired, he was anxious to fill up a portion of his time with some active employment. Mr. Wilkinson made an application for this appointment at a time when he had not acted as election agent in any way. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Hon. Members might say "Oh!" as much as they pleased, but he repeated that Mr. Wilkinson had not acted as election agent in any way whatever at the time he applied for this post. When, however, the Corrupt Practices Act came into operation, it became doubtful how far paid agents might be employed; and at a recent bye-election for the City of York, when Mr. Lockwood, a barrister on the Northern Circuit, became a candidate, Mr. Wilkinson acted as his honorary election agent. He could see no reason why that fact ought to disqualify Mr. Wilkinson from being appointed to this office. He believed that pressure had been put upon the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade by leading Conservatives in York and others in order to induce him to alter his determination as to appointing a Receiver in Bankruptcy at Scarborough instead of York. A deputation, composed of gentlemen belonging to both political Parties, waited upon the right hon. Gentleman, and he (Mr. Dodds) knew that the President of the Board of Trade yielded to their representations under great pressure. One of the leading Conservatives in York told him (Mr. Dodds) how the right hon. Gentleman had relieved the city from a a great difficulty. In consequence of his own personal knowledge of both political Parties in the North of England, and the professional position he occupied in that part of the country, he had received more applications for recommendations in connection with these appointments than probably any other man in that House. Perhaps the House would allow him to state what had happened in his own immediate neighbourhood. Among the applicants was a leading Conservative agent in the borough of Middlesborough, who had acted as agent for the junior Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Guy Dawnay); and he (Mr. Dodds) had endorsed the application with a statement that the gentleman in question was a good man. Before, however, the appointment was made—as soon as the application became known to the Town Council of Stockton and the people of Middlesborough—there was a great outcry from both of these boroughs against the appointment of a Conservative to the office. Representations were accordingly made to the Board of Trade, and the answer returned by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was this—"We have not considered politics at all in making these appointments; we only consider the fact that the gentleman we propose to appoint is a good man, and we, therefore, intend to appoint him." He had been appointed accordingly. He (Mr. Dodds) spoke of these matters as having occurred within his own personal knowledge. He had happened to go to the Board of Trade to see Mr. Giffen with reference to another of these appointments—[*Cries of* "Name!"]—and he had found from the beginning to the end that political considerations were never allowed in the smallest degree to interfere in the matter. As a matter of fact, in his own borough and in his own district a Conservative had been appointed, proving conclusively the truth of the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that political considerations had nothing whatever to do with these appointments.

MR. ECROYD said, that, in the few remarks he intended to make, he should endeavour to avoid all Party animus. He had acted as one of the Members of the Grand Committee on the Bankruptcy Bill last year, and at the commencement of the sittings of that Committee there was a natural anxiety that the patronage created by the Bill should not be used for the furtherance of Party and political objects. They were all glad, therefore, to receive the positive assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that any such course would be avoided. He did not for one moment dispute the correctness of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that he had endeavoured, and that the Committee entrusted with the important task of making these appointments had also endeavoured, to select only the best men; but in most, if not all, places there must have been several men of equal ability and fitness for such appointments, and the present complaint was that, there being a choice of competent men, a great preponderance of gentlemen of one particular Party had been selected. In regard to his own district, the person who had been appointed was a gentleman at Preston, against whose fitness and capacity not a word would be said by him, and he believed not a word would be said by anyone; but it so happened that Preston was a town where Conservatism was exceedingly predominant, and if this gentleman was eligible for the appointment he must maintain that there were men equally eligible in the other political Party who were passed over. This was not a matter which ought to be discussed in regard to mere Party and personal considerations, and if that were the only meaning of it, he, for one, would certainly decline to take any part in the discussion. The Bankruptcy Act, however, was an important measure in regard to which he had entertained sanguine hopes that it might tend to the promotion of commercial morality in the country. How essential, therefore, even from the beginning, to avoid any possible imputation of Party objects in connection with the appointments made under it. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, no doubt with perfect sincerity, asserted that he had not allowed himself to be swayed by political considerations in making the appointments; but, in his

(Mr. Ecroyd's) opinion, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have laid down as a rule for the guidance of the Committee which he had appointed to act in conjunction with the Board of Trade this simple principle—that no man who had occupied the position of election agent in connection with either political Party should be eligible for the appointment of Official Receiver. It was perfectly absurd to say that such a rule would have narrowed the choice so much that eligible appointments could not have been made; and certainly, if such a principle had been laid down for the guidance of the Committee, the most grievous suspicion in regard to the furtherance of Party and political aims would have been avoided. He did not, for one moment, believe that the right hon. Gentleman had consciously departed from the pledge which he gave; but he did believe that there had been a serious and lamentable misadventure which had created grave doubt in the minds of many people as to the safety of measures of a centralizing character such as the Bankruptcy Act. The fact was now patent to the country that out of 67 appointments 51 had been made of gentlemen who were closely connected with the political Party to which the right hon. Gentleman belonged, and it was even more lamentable that of those 51 no fewer than 19 had been Liberal election agents. The appointment of a Select Committee was now necessary to reassure the country in this early stage of the operation of the Bankruptcy Act that there was no danger of the development of officialism or centralization, or of the institution of a system which had proved most disastrous in the United States of America. They knew perfectly well that the principle of conferring the spoils upon the victors had been worked out in the United States in a manner highly detrimental to the best interests of that country; and he was sure he might appeal to Gentlemen of the Party opposite who had been Members of the Grand Committee on Trade last year to confirm him in stating that there was a feeling not confined to Gentlemen of one political Party, but freely expressed by both, that this great political danger should be avoided. He believed, if a full inquiry were made into the whole matter, and if it could be proved that every endeavour had been made to avoid attaching the slightest Party interest to these appointments, such a result would allay much legitimate anxiety now felt throughout the country. For himself, he believed that the right hon. Gentleman himself had the greatest interest in assenting to the appointment of a Select Committee, and he entertained a confident expectation that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to show that he had not intentionally failed to fulfil the pledge he had given upon this subject.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he thought it was a remarkable circumstance that of the four hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who represented very large centres of population, and who had taken part in this debate, not one had made any complaint whatever in regard to the operation of the Act, or the distribution of patronage under it in those parts of the country which they respectively represented. Of those four hon. Members three came from the county in which he also had the honour of representing a constituency. The fourth was the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and not one of them, in dealing with the subject, had made a single representation in regard to the maladministration of the Act in the district with which he was most intimately connected. He thought it would have been much more to the credit of the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) if he had made some reference to the distribution of the patronage in the county which he himself represented. In that county there was a population of 4,000,000, and it was a matter of the greatest importance that the Act should be properly administered. What was, therefore, incumbent upon the right hon. Gentleman was either to allege against the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade or the Government that the Act was not being properly administered in Lancaster, or that its administration in that county had failed. It was well known to the right hon. Gentleman that in the chief town of Lancashire—namely, Lancaster—a Conservative solicitor had been appointed, to the great dismay of the Liberal Party. The hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) informed the House that in making these appointments the Government had paid regard to the political opinions of the different candidates for the office. All he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) could say was that, to his own knowledge—and he believed the Members for Manchester would make the same representation—although the Representatives for Manchester and Salford had recommended the applications made by several persons, they were perfectly ignorant of the politics of these persons; and there was this additional fact, that not one of the applicants recommended by the hon. Members for Manchester and Salford had received any appointment whatever. There was only one accusation which had been made that evening which deserved attention, and he was glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had directed his attention to it. The hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) said that one of the gentlemen who had been appointed to this office had made a composition with his creditors. [MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: No.] The hon. Member had stated, at all events, that the gentleman in question had been in an unfortunate position with regard to his creditors. He regarded that as an unfortunate statement, and he would on no account be in the position of the hon. Member for Evesham, who, having received a letter from the President of the Board of Trade asking him for the names of the persons whose appointments he intended to question, had neglected to answer that letter, and had, nevertheless, made a statement seriously affecting the credit of persons who were now officially connected with the State, without having done his utmost to ascertain whether the allegations he made were well-founded and correct. He regretted the Party and political animus which the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had imported into the debate when he talked about the Birmingham Caucus, and the political influences which had been brought to bear upon the matter. The question for the consideration of the House was one of a plain and simple character—namely, the desirability of the appointments which had been made; and he thought the debate might have been confined to that simple point. He thought the judgment of the House would be unanimous. The statement of the President of the Board of Trade did him great honour; it not only acquitted him from the charge made against him, but it showed that in circumstances of great difficulty and delicacy he had used his best endeavour to discharge his duty to the State with the utmost conscientiousness.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would only detain the House for a few moments while he gave the reasons why he should refuse to support the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee. The Motion was—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner into which the patronage conferred on the President of the Board of Trade by the Bankruptcy Act of 1883, has been exercised by him."

If the House were to agree to that Resolution, it would express dissatisfaction with the statement made by the President of the Board of Trade, and would declare that that statement was altogether insufficient to acquit him of personal responsibility in the matter. Having listened to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, he would ask the House what more could any man have done than the President of the Board of Trade had done? He did not think that any man could have done more than had actually been done by the right hon. Gentleman to shield himself from all suspicion of favouritism in making these appointments; but, while he said that, he must be allowed to express regret that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to accede to the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry, not into his own appointments, but into the selections which had been made by his own Departmental Committee, because it was impossible not to see, whether consciously or not he would not say, that those who had the management of the selection had given a most extraordinary proportion of the appointments to persons who belonged to the political Party now in power. It was perfectly incredible, as the noble Lord on the Front Opposition Bench (Lord George Hamilton) had remarked, that all the available talent, or even to the extent of 30 per cent, was concentrated in the small ring constituted by Liberal electioneering agents. It would strike a blow at the political life of the country, if such an example was to be set without any inquiry being made. He could not forget that this was not the first occasion on which appointments under the Bankruptcy Act had been criticized. He could not for a moment suppose that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, for the sake of his own good name, which was indissolubly connected with this measure, would allow that name to be associated with anything like favouritism. The right hon. Gentleman would be judged as a successful politician and statesman by the success of the Bankruptcy Act, and he was far too great a man to jeopardize the Act by appointing men to important judicial offices whose only recommendation was to be found in the activity with which they had promoted Party movement among the borough constituencies. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had thought it necessary to make this statement in order to show why it was that he should vote against the Resolution in the case of a Division, and he would only repeat the expression of his regret that some inquiry was not to be instituted.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he had come down to the House under the idea that they were going to discuss the Estimates; but he found the House engaged in an idle and profitless discussion upon the bankruptcy appointments. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said there was *primâ facia* evidence in support of the charges of the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), and, therefore, a Committee ought to be appointed; and he knew that hon. Members from Ireland were constantly asserting that the appointments made in connection with that country were monstrous. Would, however, the right hon. Gentleman get up to support a Committee of Inquiry into every one of them? Now, what were the facts of this case? The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had appointed a Departmental Committee, and had told that Committee to find the best men for Official Assignees who could be found. It did not at all surprise him (Mr. Labouchere) that out of 67 appointments it had been discovered that in 51 cases the best candidates for the appointments were Liberals. That was precisely the result he should have anticipated. While the hon. Gentlemen opposite had been complaining of the conduct of the President of the Board of Trade, he (Mr. Labouchere) had been sitting there nearly boiling over with indignation, because he also had a complaint to make against the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had appointed a Committee, and had actually told them not to ask whether a candidate was a Liberal or a Conservative. He strongly protested against the right hon. Gentleman having given so many as 16 of these appointments to Conservatives. It was a falling away from all the old traditions of political life. He quite agreed with the remark of Lord Palmerston when that noble Lord said—"The best man is the man I like best." Hon. Gentlemen opposite when in Office always appointed Conservatives to desirable posts, and never appointed Liberals. He, therefore, did complain of his right hon. Friend for having, in this instance, appointed any Conservative at all; and he did so because there was no principle of give and take in the matter. The Conservatives never appointed Liberals or Radicals; but yet the Liberals were perpetually appointing Conservatives. Look at the Bishops and the Judges. A Liberal Government were continually appointing the Rev. So-and-so to a Bishopric, and when any inquiry was made as to his political principles it was found that he was a Conservative. He held that a Liberal Government should never appoint a Conservative until they discovered that no sound Liberal was prepared to take the place. His notions might be old-fashioned; but they were the notions which had made England what it was, and they might depend upon it that they would gain nothing by altering them in this objectionable manner. The hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds) said that when a man asked him for his aid in getting an appointment, he never thought of inquiring whether he was a Conservative or a Liberal. Now, if a man asked him (Mr. Labouchere) to aid him in getting an appointment, the first question he put to him was—"What are your politics?" And if he did not find that his politics were sound he invariably said—"Wait until your friends come in and then you may get what you want." He hoped, if the hon. Member for Evesham intended to take a Division, he would do so at once, so that the House might be able to enter upon some more practical question.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he should be glad to learn whether the Government adopted the extraordinary argument contained in the speech to which they had just listened, because it would simplify matters very much. If it was upon that ground that the Government was to be defended, then the case was clearly proved. There was, however, one slight element forgotten in the speech to which they had just listened — namely, the pledge that had been given that no such considerations as that referred to should affect any of the appointments. Of course, the hon. Gentleman might think that an immaterial circumstance, but most hon. Members would regard it as of some importance. He (Sir Hardinge Giffard) had been a little surprised to hear the concluding portions of the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), because, although the hon. Member stated that he could not support the Motion, it appeared to him (Sir Hardinge Giffard) that he gave cogent reasons for supporting the appointment of a Committee. There was one reason given by the hon. Gentleman which he heartily sympathized with—namely, that they must accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that he had nothing to do with the matter. He had no doubt they would all receive that assurance on both sides of the House. At the same time, however, it seemed to him that a serious principle was involved in the assumption that when a Minister was intrusted with a Parliamentary duty, he could not only shield himself, but everyone else, from responsibility, by simply saying that personally he had had nothing to do with it. He should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman had something to do with it, and that it was his duty to see that the pledge which he had given to Parliament was not broken. They all accepted what the right hon. Gentleman said; but let them see what the facts of the case were. He did not propose to deal with the argument that 51 out of 67 were Liberals; but he would like to know what a learned Judge would say if he were dealing with the appointments which had been made in this instance, and whether a candidate at an election had been guilty or not of corrupt practices when he gave certain appointments to persons who happened to be supporters of his own political Party? He had been glad to see the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds) on his feet—they often heard the hon. Member without seeing him on his feet. The hon. Gentleman had given the House a remarkable example. He told them that one of the appointments had been given to a gentleman who had assisted a very distinguished member of the Bar at a recent election for the City of York, under these peculiar circumstances—that since the Corrupt Practices Bill passed, it was impossible for any election agent to receive remuneration from the candidate, and, therefore, he ought to receive remuneration from the Ministry. So far as he (Sir Hardinge Giffard) could see, that appeared to be the only justification for this particular appointment. What was it they were now asking for? It was not for condemnation, but for inquiry—an inquiry that would satisfy everybody that there was no ground for the accusation, or, if ground was shown, that then they might act upon it. He did not intend to treat seriously the trifling which the question had received at the hands of the last speaker; but how did the public regard the question? An hon. Gentleman had taken the trouble to verify the accusations which had been made public in various parts of the country, and he said—"I have satisfied myself that these accusations are true, and I undertake to prove them, if you will give me a Committee." What was the answer given to that statement? Did the Ministers say the accusations were not true? No. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) said he did not know anything about them, and that he certainly was not aware that any gentleman appointed was a Liberal agent. That, however, was not the question; but whether these appointments had been very largely given to prominent Liberal partizans as a reward for their political action? It certainly appeared to be a questionable transaction which it was very necessary to inquire into, and especially one incident which had been mentioned — namely, the withdrawal of a Petition and a bargain between the two political Parties in a borough. That seemed to him to be a very serious charge; and so far he could not understand that there had been any denial of it. All that his hon. Friend the Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) asked was that he should be allowed to prove these accusations. With reference to the cases that had been mentioned, he thought it would have been better if the names of the gentlemen whose appointments it was intended to call into question had been given to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade; but, at the same time, it was quite true that these were not things that were heard of now for the first time. All the names had been published, and the nature of the cases also. If the names had been given that morning—and he thought it would have been better if they had been—it would not have decided the matter "Aye" or "No" that night; but there must have been a question either of adjournment or of allowing the case to go to a Committee of Inquiry, and that was what his hon. Friend asked for. He (Sir Hardinge Giffard) did not say that the charges were true, or, at any rate, every one of them; but he should be glad to know that there had been no such malversation as was suggested in the accusations which had been made. The matter ought not to be passed over without inquiry, either for the sake of the gentlemen who were concerned, or for the sake of the right hon. Gentleman himself. It would be most unsatisfactory to let the matter stay where it was now. No one could doubt that it would be the subject of accusation throughout the country hereafter if an opportunity were not afforded of having it cleared up now.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite that the adoption of the Motion would not involve any censure on the President of the Board of Trade. He had never yet heard of an instance in which a Committee had been moved for except on the ground that a *primâ facie* case of misconduct on the part of the Minister had been made out. If this Committee were granted, those who now said it could be granted without any censure being passed upon his right hon. Friend, would go through the country saying that the House of Commons had condemned him for the way in which he had exercised the patronage of the Crown. He knew something himself about the way in which persons went about the country making accusations upon no better foundation than that. To appoint a Committee to inquire into the mode in which the patronage of the Crown had been exercised by a Member of the Government would have the further disadvantage of discrediting the officials who had been appointed. They could not appoint such a Committee or have such an Inquiry without a certain amount of discredit being attached to the officials, and in that way the working of the Act would be materially impaired. That being so, it required a very strong case indeed to justify the appointment of such a Committee. He knew personally something about the course which had been taken in making these appointments. Of his own knowledge he was aware that for months past his right hon Friend, in conjunction with those who had acted with him, had considered these appointments with an earnest and anxious desire to select the best men who could be obtained. He said no more than the truth when he said that his right hon. Friend was anxious only for the success of these appointments; that they should have nothing to do with politics, but that the country should get the best men who could be obtained in order to insure the satisfactory working of the Act. He hoped the House would look at the matter from a common-sense point of view. The reputation of his right hon. Friend depended to some extent upon the way in which the Act worked. What evidence was there, on the other hand, that any improper political motives had entered into the making of these appointments? It was suggested that his right hon. Friend had appointed more Liberals than Conservatives, and that the proportion was grossly unfair. Was it at all likely that his right hon. Friend would have allowed such a consideration to influence his mind? He had the strongest reasons for acting in a totally different spirit. If he had been foolish enough to do anything of that kind he must have known that the work in which he was engaged would have been known in the course of a month, and that his own political reputation must be sacrificed. Political objects in making the appointments never once entered the mind of his right hon. Friend; but his only thought was how to get the best men. His right hon. Friend appointed a Committee to save time in the work of sifting every case. They did sift every case. He knew of his own personal knowledge that the object had been to ascertain who were the best men, and that no politics whatever had entered into the matter. It had been said that a great many more Liberals had been appointed than Conservatives. First of all, the statement rested entirely upon the assertion of the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland). They had that statement, and they were asked to take it as evidence of an improper motive on the part of the President of the Board of Trade in making the appointments. In making the appointments his right hon. Friend was guided by the action of his Departmental Committee, whose Report was before the House. His right hon. Friend might have made these officials permanent officials, so that they could not be displaced when the other political Party came into power, but he had not done so; he had merely made temporary appointments, every one of which could be set aside if right hon. Gentlemen opposite came into power. Surely that was very strong evidence of the good faith of the right hon. Gentleman, and showed that he was really anxious to get the best men he could. The House had before them, under the hands of the Committee appointed by the right hon. Gentleman, a statement that they had recommended the men who appeared to them to be most fitted, and they had never concerned themselves about the politics of the applicants, and that in the vast majority of cases they knew nothing whatever about the politics of the candidates. That statement was signed by Mr. Giffen, Mr. Harding, Mr. Storeham, and Mr. John Smith. Was the House going to say that that statement was false? And if it was not false, was the mere statement of an hon. Member of that House to outweigh the statement made by the Members of the Departmental Committee and signed, in which these Gentlemen pledged themselves that politics had never entered into their consideration? Was that statement false?—because, if it was not false, there could be no ground for an Inquiry. It was said that the majority of those who had been appointed were Liberals; but all the appointments were based upon a Report from public officials, and he challenged hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that those officials were not public servants of the highest honour and integrity. Some of them had been for many years in the Public Service, and they pledged themselves to the truth of the statement they had made. If that statement was true, there could be no ground for an Inquiry. There might have been a blunder, but, to the best of the knowledge of these gentlemen, they had selected the best men; at any rate, they had not allowed themselves to be actuated by political motives. If hon. Members pressed for an Inquiry they necessarily suggested that the statement made by these gentlemen was false, and in that way they cast the most serious imputation upon men who had been long in the Public Service, and who were men of as much honour and integrity as any Member of that House. So far as he could make out, no one had said that the appointments were improper or that there were better men in competition. What the charge amounted to was that so many Conservatives had been appointed against so many Liberals; but, unless the signed Report of the Departmental Committee was absolutely untrue, there was no ground whatever for saying that political considerations had entered into the appointments. It was impossible for the House to appoint a Committee without involving an accusation of that kind; and he asked them in all seriousness whether a *primâ facie* case had been made out? Had any Member ventured to say that any one of these appointments was an improper appointment? No such charge had been made, or was attempted to be substantiated. The real charge was this—that, although the best men might have been appointed, they were not Conservatives. That was what the case came to; and was that a ground for appointing a Committee of Inquiry? Hon. Gentlemen opposite admitted that they had no case; at any rate, they had not brought one forward. What they said was, there ought to be an Inquiry, because it was wrong to appoint men, even if they were the best men, if they happened to be Liberals. But, as he had pointed out, there was a far more serious matter involved in the question than the mere appointment of a Committee of Inquiry—namely, the fact that a Committee could not be appointed without casting a serious imputation upon valuable public servants, two of whom were gentlemen exercising most important functions under the Bankruptcy Act—namely, the Chief Administrator in Bankruptcy, and the Chief Official Receiver in London. What was proposed by the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) was to upset all the valuable work they were doing, and to cast upon them the stigma that they had been influenced by improper motives. He submitted that he had made out a very much stronger case in the public interest against the appointment of this Committee than anything that had been made out in its favour.

Mr. RAIKES said, he always listened with attention and interest to his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, especially when his hon. and learned Friend endeavoured to argue a question rather than to carry away the House by the mere force of declamation; but he would remind his hon. and learned Friend of a case that occurred before he (the Solicitor General) became a Member of that House, and in which he (Mr. Raikes) was personally concerned. Therefore, he could speak from positive recollection. The case he referred to occurred as far back as 1871 or 1872. It became his painful duty at that time to move for a Committee of Inquiry into the conduct of a Minister who was a Member of the last Liberal Administration with reference to certain proceedings in connection with his Department, and the Motion he made was at once seconded by the Minister himself whose conduct the House was invited to inquire into—at any rate, if he did not formally second it, he rose and said he was sorry that someone else had done so, because he had been anxious to have that opportunity himself. That was the way in which a Minister of that day met charges of this nature. What a change had come over them since. That night a Motion had been made for an inquiry into the conduct of the President of the Board of Trade in the administration of the powers conferred upon him by the Bankruptcy Act of last Session, and they had had speeches of great animation, but not very much argument, from Gentlemen of the Long Robe who adorned the Treasury Bench. All of them deprecated the Motion; but he could not help being reminded of the words—

> "Methinks the lady doth protest too much."

He thought that hon. and learned Gentlemen who had seats on the Treasury Bench should confine themselves more to argumentative statements, and not appeal so much to the feelings of the House. His hon. and learned Friend (the Solicitor General) was of opinion that if any inquiry were granted a terrible slur or stigma would be cast upon three or four most respectable members of the Public Service. That was the gist of the argument of his hon. and learned Friend, and the hon. and learned Gentleman attempted to draw the House aside from the responsibility which necessarily attached to the Head of the Department, in order to induce them to abstain from inquiry out of consideration for the feelings of the right hon. Gentleman's subordinates. He did not suppose that any Member on that side of the House would yield to his hon. and learned Friend in the respect he entertained for the gentlemen whose names had been mentioned; but, although they respected those gentleman, there was no particular reason why they should not inquire into the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman whose course of action in this matter was impugned. He thought they were going to hear something about another document which appeared in the public Press in close connection with that which had been referred to. He remembered reading that document with feelings almost of awe. It was a Minute of the Lords of the Council. He had always been accustomed to treat with proper respect a document emanating from so distinguished and so respectable a source, and he had seen occasionally the names of two or three distinguished Members of Her Majesty's Government placed at the head of such a document as having been present when those Minutes were being propounded. On that particular occasion he felt that the document which had emanated from the Council Chamber, and which bore the name of the right hon. Joseph Chamberlain, was one which deserved the consideration of the House and the country. That document, however, did not have a place in the speech of the hon. and learned Solicitor General; but he thought it formed part of the question which would come under the consideration of the country and the House in connection with the matter raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Evesham. He would advert for one moment to the result of the Motion which, 10 or 12 years ago, he ventured to make in that House for inquiry into the conduct of a Member of the Administration. As he had said, in the first instance, the Government met him with extreme willingness to grant that inquiry; in fact, he might say that the Gentleman who then managed the Business of the Government in that House came to consult him as to the persons who should form the Committee. But after the statement made on that occasion by the Minister into whose conduct the inquiry was asked for, he was desirous of withdrawing his Motion. The zeal, however, of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, always the depositories of purity, prevented his withdrawing the Motion he had propounded, and it was negatived by the House. Three days afterwards the Minister resigned. He thought this was a matter worthy of the attention of the House in connection with this subject, though he did not wish at that moment to refer more particularly to the Gentleman whose conduct was then the subject of the Motion for Inquiry. He thought, himself, that the speech which that Gentleman made in the House was a fair answer to the charge which he brought against him, and he was anxious to withdraw his Motion. He mentioned the subject to show how such questions were then dealt with by a Liberal Government. He had not heard the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Evesham; but he had had the advantage of listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and he could not but think that if any speech were required to prove the case of the hon. Member for Evesham, that hon. Member's speech had made it absolutely necessary that a Committee should be appointed to investigate not only this subject, but the question of other appointments made by Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for Northampton was the *enfant terrible* of the Liberal Party—he said what he thought, and the House was always indebted to him for the light which he brought to bear on questions of this kind. He (Mr. Raikes) would not express an opinion upon the charges which it was sought to submit to a Committee of that House; but he was confident that if Her Majesty's Government could desire by any means, or in any way, to shake public confidence in the distribution of patronage by the Liberal Party, or in any way to expose themselves to attack as to the use they had had made of that patronage, they could not do so more effectually than by meeting this Motion with a direct negative. He had been in hope that a different answer would be forthcoming than that which had been given by the Law Officers of the Crown to the Motion of his hon. Friend. There was another point which deserved the attention of the House in connection with this subject—namely, that the Bankruptcy Bill, under which these appointments were made, came back to the House from the Standing Committee on the 13th of August last, and it was absolutely impossible to raise, at that time, a fair discussion as to whether it was desirable that the appointments should be vested in the President of the Board of Trade, or in any other person or persons enjoying official positions. Therefore the Government, by bringing in the Bankruptcy Bill late in the Session, in pressing it on the House and in securing its enactment in the last days of the Session, had assumed a responsibility for the measure which did not ordinarily attach to measures which were fairly debated in that House. The House of Commons had had no opportunity of discussing fully, fairly, and freely the propriety of these appointments being vested solely in the President of the Board of Trade, and, that being so, he should have thought that the President of the Board of Trade would not have acted unadvisedly had he himself moved for an inquiry as to how this patronage had been distributed. There had been a great deal of vain talk of imputations being cast upon Members of the Government in consequence of such a Motion as this being accepted by the House. But the Members of the Government were not made of sugar-candy, and they must be prepared to have their conduct considered and discussed like other people. As he understood the Motion, his hon. Friend prejudged nothing; there was no assertion that any of the information which had reached him was matter of proof; and he only asked the House to take the opportunity which this Motion afforded of instituting an inquiry which he (Mr. Raikes) should be happy to find resulted in whitewashing the President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. HEALY said, he viewed this matter, more or less, from the standpoint of an outsider. Irish Members, of course, came to that House expecting a considerable amount of instruction; but what did they find? They found an Assembly of the first Gentlemen in Europe, members of a superior race, blackguarding one another with charges of venality and corruption. [*Interruption.*] Why, the President of the Board of Trade, in one of his recent speeches, was good enough to taunt Members of that House with using language tantamount to the employment in warfare of poisoned wells and explosive bullets. If he were the right hon. Gentleman, he should say that a Motion of this kind was a great deal worse than the so-called poisoned wells and explosive bullets said to be employed by Members from Ireland, because they had never charged the Members of the Government with corruption. If he voted with the Government it would be because he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman had only been able to appoint 16 Conservatives. He only wished, with regard to Ireland, where nine-tenths of the population were Catholics and Nationalists, that out of 67 appointments even one had been given to a gentleman of the persuasion and politics of Irish Members on those Benches. He should tender the President of the Board of Trade the homage of his support on that occasion for the extraordinary liberality he had shown to the Tory Party. One hon. Member had said that it was extraordinary that all the talent of the country should lie on the Liberal side. They were continually told that the Tory Party was the stupid Party. In saying that, he was only using the language of Englishmen; and when he contemplated the equation of talent as between Liberals and Conservatives, he would say that the ratio was probably as 60 to 16. No one doubted for a moment that, if the Tory Party in that House had anything like common ability or leadership, the Members of the Government would not be occupying their present position. There could be no talent in the Tory Party, or its Leader would not have made a fool of himself in the North of Ireland. [*Interruption.*] He was not applying that term to anyone as a Member of that House; but he was entitled to express his opinion as to what went on outside the House. He believed this Motion was levelled at the President of the Board of Trade because he was the spokesman of the Radical Party, and, further, that if he were not so outspoken this outcry would not have been made against him. Looking at the way in which the government of Ireland was conducted, and seeing that not a single Catholic had been appointed in that country, where nine-tenths of the people were Catholics and Nationalists, he congratulated the President of the Board of Trade on having made 16 Conservative appointments out of the 67 at his disposal, and for that reason he should vote against the Motion of the hon. Member for Evesham.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 101; Noes 53: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn*.

Supply, — Committee upon *Monday* next.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Select Committee on Public Accounts *nominated*:—Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Laing, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Charles Mills, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Salt, Mr. Seely, and Mr. Shaw:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

DUBLIN MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Select Committee on Dublin Museum of Science and Art *nominated*:—Mr. Courtney, Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Plunket:—Two to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS.

Select Committee on East Indian Railways *nominated*:—Committee to consist of Nineteen Members:—Mr. Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. Edward Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton, Mr.

Baxter, Mr. Dalrymple, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Wodehouse, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Carbutt, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Gorst, and Mr. Kynaston Cross:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Seven to be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 10th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Congleton, after the death of his brother.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Habitual Criminals Act Amendment * (28).

Second Reading—Mr. Speaker's Retirement.*

TUNIS—CONSULAR JURISDICTION—THE DEBATE OF FRIDAY LAST.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Lord LAMINGTON said, he wished to explain an observation which he made on Friday night. The noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) appeared to have been under the impression that he (Lord Lamington) said Mr. Gladstone's Government had ceded the Ionian Islands to Greece. He was perfectly aware that Lord Palmerston was in Office at the time, and what he said was that Mr. Gladstone, having been sent out as High Commissioner, suggested the concession of the Islands.

Earl GRANVILLE said, that what he had stated the other night was perfectly accurate. Mr. Gladstone had been sent out by a Conservative Government, and the cession of the Islands was made under Lord Palmerston's Government. Mr. Gladstone had recommended great reforms in a Liberal direction; and, although Mr. Gladstone approved of the cession, it was not upon his recommendation that it took place. It happened that they were suddenly summoned in the autumn for a Cabinet. Mr. Gladstone met Sir George Lewis outside the door and asked him what was the object of the summons, and was told that Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell wished to obtain the sanction of the Cabinet to the cession of the Ionian Islands.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN—LEGISLATION.—QUESTION.

The Bishop of ROCHESTER asked, Whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce this Session a Bill for the better protection of women and children?

The Earl of DALHOUSIE, in reply, said, that a Bill with that object was in course of preparation, and would be introduced as soon as possible.

MERV AND AFGHANISTAN.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

The Earl of LYTTON, in rising to move for Papers showing what communications had passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, about Merv and Afghanistan since the year 1881, said: My Lords, I rise to ask your Lordships to agree to the Motion of which I have given Notice. But I do not bring forward this Motion with any sanguine expectation of expediting the distribution of the Papers promised us by Her Majesty's Government. I am told that for those Papers we shall still have to wait an indefinite time; and my main object is to call attention to the position in which, meanwhile, we are placed by the announcement, made to us more than a fortnight ago by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), that the Emperor of Russia has accepted the unconditional surrender and allegiance of the Merv Turcoman tribes. I understand that the noble Earl has not yet had time to consider fully the important despatches from St. Petersburg to which he then referred; and I can well believe that he is not prepared, nor do I think we can fairly expect him to be prepared, to state to us definitely, and in precise detail, the course which Her Majesty's Government propose to adopt in consequence of the event he has announced to us; and in consequence also of the importance attached by them, in the Papers last laid before us, to the prevention of that event which they have nevertheless failed to prevent. But, to some extent, the matter has already been discussed in the other House of Parliament, and I presume that the view taken of it by the noble Earl will not greatly or materially differ from that which was then indicated the right by hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in regard to the course of action now contemplated by Her Majesty's Government. Now, I am not going to weary your Lordships with many details or quotations from the numerous official documents and speeches which have been written and spoken upon this subject. I shall endeavour to describe, as briefly as I can, the manner in which I conceive that Russia's possession of Merv must inevitably affect our position in India, and to state the reasons why it appears to me impossible to accept, with any degree of satisfaction, the sketch of future policy which has been put forward in "another place" by the President of the Local Government Board, and will, I suppose, be again put forward by the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to-night. I shall also have something to say as to the course which, in my judgment, ought to have been taken, and which I think ought now to be taken, so far as the policy of the present Government has left open to us any means of taking it; but, in the first place, your Lordships will, I trust, allow me to make one or two observations upon the situation of the territory and the character of the population which have thus been added to the Asiatic Dominions of Russia in the vicinity of our own, and in the closest possible proximity with that State which we have hitherto been accustomed to regard as the natural barrier between the two. My Lords, Merv is a district of ill-defined dimensions, lying between two rivers—the Murghab and the Heri-Rud, or Tejend. These two rivers, after running parallel to each other for about 70 miles, ultimately lose themselves in the great Turcoman desert. The so-called cities of this district are mud huts, and are in ruins; and the importance of the district lies entirely in the fact that, although it is surrounded on all sides by sandy deserts, it is itself a region of extraordinary fertility, placed precisely at that point where the two main roads from Russia to Afghanistan intersect each other. One of them is the road through Krasnovodsk, on the Caspian, to Herat; and the other is the road from Tashkend, through Bokhara, across the Oxus, in the same direction. So much for the district. As for the population, it consists, as your Lordships are well aware, of some of the rudest, but, at the same time, the most warlike tribes of Central Asia—born fighting men and born horsemen, who, if disciplined and equipped by a European military Power, cannot fail to furnish that Power with a numerous and splendid irregular Cavalry. The ruins which represent the City of Merv itself are about 230 or 240 miles distant from Herat. How far the Merv district extends in the same direction it is difficult to say; because, in countries of this character, all boundaries are necessarily vague and undefined, or, rather, it would be more correct to say that they are defined, from time to time, by the comparative military force of those who live upon opposite sides of them. From Herat, which is at present in Afghanistan, Afghan territory stretches towards Merv, and the Merv oasis stretches towards Afghanistan. The boundary between them, if anything that can be called a boundary exists at all, is wholly uncertain; but it is a significant fact that the latest official Russian maps put the South-Eastern extremity of the Merv district at about 25 miles from Herat, and the distance from Maimena would, I believe, be much the same. The effect, therefore, of the unconditional submission of the Merv Turcomans to Russia is that, according to Russian computation, the Russian Frontier now becomes practically contiguous with the Frontiers of Afghanistan, and this contact takes place at the weakest point of the Afghan Frontier; for neither the present Ameer of Cabul, nor his Predecessor, has ever been able to establish his authority firmly at Herat. Now, I request your Lordships to consider for a moment what this fact really means; how it is related to the views repeatedly expressed by the most distinguished English and Indian statesmen of all parties and all schools, respecting the conditions necessary to the security of our Indian Frontier; and what light is thrown by it upon the policy which has been, and is being, pursued, as also upon that which ought to be pursued in that matter. Up to the present moment, in all controversies about Indian Frontier policy, one fundamental principle has been invariably admitted and maintained on all sides, and I do not suppose it will be disavowed to-night by any Member of Her Majesty's Government. It is that the free access of Russia to Afghanistan, and her close intercourse with the Afghan Government, must necessarily be highly dangerous to our power in India. And the reason why it would be dangerous is, that it would enable Russia to stir up the Afghans against us, whenever she had any strong motive for so doing, and through the Afghans to exert a very disturbing influence even over some of the Native States of India itself. I might cite a long list of eminent Liberal statesmen, some of them dead, some of them now before me, and of distinguished Indian administrators, including Lord Lawrence, who have all emphatically affirmed this principle. But I will only now observe that this remarkable consensus of experienced opinion is not merely theoretical. It has been powerfully confirmed by recent experience; for, on a late occasion, when Russia had cause to fear war with England in the West, her first thought, her first instinctive act, was, naturally enough, to intrigue against us in Asia, and to do this through Afghanistan. I am aware that there are some principles cherished by former Liberal Cabinets which, in the name of a more advanced Liberalism, have been discarded by Her Majesty's present Ministers. But if they have discarded this principle also, at least they have never avowed their rejection of it. On the contrary, they have repeatedly informed us that the very corner-stone of the Central Asian policy still is, as it has been for the last 15 years, an understanding with Russia based on the acknowledgment elicited from her Government by Lord Clarendon, "that Afghanistan is entirely outside the sphere of her influence." So far, then, there is no difference of opinion—at least, I presume there is none. We are all agreed that Afghanistan should stand between us and Russia, and that Russian influence ought, if possible, to be excluded from Afghanistan. But when we come to consider how this desirable end is to be attained, we are at once confronted with two different and conflicting views on the subject. What has now taken place at Merv throws considerable light upon the relative efficacy of these views in the past, and I therefore think it may be some guide to us in the consideration of what ought to be done for the future. My Lords, the Ministerial view, so far as it can be gathered from the exposition of it lately given in "another place," appears to be now much the same as it has always been. According to this view, the only barrier against the advance of Russian influence is to be found in Afghanistan itself. Let Afghanistan, it is said, be strong, united, independent, and friendly to England, and then the Afghans will naturally resist the approaches of Russia, maintain our interests, and remain impenetrable to her influence. If we confine our own action to subsidizing the Ameers of Cabul, and refrain from seeking any intercourse between their subjects and ours, this happy result, it is believed, will come about of its own accord. As for anything further, all we can properly do in the matter is to make diplomatic representations to Russia, to obtain from her acknowledgments—such, for instance, as the one elicited by Lord Clarendon, that Afghanistan is outside the sphere of her influence—and then, from time to time, to claim from her a renewed observance of those acknowledgments. That appears to be the view still cherished by Her Majesty's Government. The other view, a very different one, which was acted on during my tenure of Office in India, is that Russia's steady advance towards Afghanistan and our own frontier, and the ultimate extension of her influence into Afghanistan, are the natural and inevitable result of her position in Central Asia, and that, that being so, it is therefore puerile, pitiful, and even vexatious to be continually endeavouring to try and coax, or wheedle, or extort from her reluctant pledges on this subject, which, from the very nature of her position, she is powerless to keep. And here let me interpose one word as to the character of Russia's position in Central Asia. Her mission there has been described as a civilizing mission; and, as far as it goes, I think this description of it is quite correct. Whenever and wherever a barbarous population is brought under the control of a strong civilized Power, the interests of civilization are advanced. But all civilized interests are not identical. If they were, there could never be such a thing as war between civilized Powers; and, therefore, this, of itself, does not necessarily prevent the territorial aggrandizement of such a Power being also advanced at the expense of its civilized neighbours. What we have to take care of is, that the interests of Russian civilization in Central Asia are not advanced in a manner detrimental to the interests of our own civilization in India. And unless we have some guarantees about this much stronger than verbal understandings which we cannot conveniently enforce, the result will undoubtedly constitute a real and serious danger to us. That being the case, and all diplomatic assurances to the contrary being absolutely worthless, the only manly and sensible thing for us to do is to take up, as opportunity may serve, such a position, both political and military, as will enable us to regard with due equanimity the increasing speed of her inevitable advance towards our frontiers. It follows from this view of our position and duties that to suppose either that there is at the present moment, or that there is the smallest prospect of there being within any assignable time, such a thing as a strong, united, independent, and friendly Afghanistan, which can be safely trusted to serve in our hour of need as a self-acting barrier against Russia, is a supposition which has absolutely no foundation in fact, and which, for that reason, ought not to be made the basis of our policy. Now, my Lords, the first of these two policies has been carried out, without opposition and without deviation, for by far the greater portion of the last 14 or 15 years. And it has been applied with absolutely no qualification during the last four or five years. For a very short time during my own connection with the Government of India, the second and different policy was adopted. But this alternative policy was not only condemned, it was also reversed, and nearly all the results of it undone by the present Government and by my Successor in the government of India. I shall not, however, trouble the House with many remarks upon this part of the matter; but I must ask leave to compare shortly the practical results of these two ways of dealing with it. It would be easy for me to multiply quotations from despatches and speeches of all sorts, showing the importance attached by many distinguished persons to the condition that Merv should not become a Russian Possession; and it would probably be a task requiring even less research to quote a series of declarations by the Russian Government, all of them calculated to lead anyone who reads them to the belief that Russia had no intention of taking possession of Merv; but I think it would be a sheer waste of time to travel with this object over all the published Papers, which bring down the story of our Central Asian diplomacy to the year 1881. I will only remind the House that an explicit declaration to that effect was made to Lord Dufferin by the Emperor of Russia; for I suppose it will not be denied—I presume, indeed, that it will be insisted upon by the noble Earl and his Colleagues—that this declaration, together with the assurances which preceded and followed it, produced upon their minds the effect which it was calculated to produce, and which it was no doubt intended to produce; and that it left them perfectly satisfied that they had nothing to apprehend from any Russian designs upon Merv. It is, in fact, essential to any possible justification of their policy that they should be able to tell us, as no doubt they will tell us, that they attached the greatest possible importance to such assurances, and that they placed implicit reliance upon them; for, however unwise of them it may have been to do this, yet, if they did not do it, they have absolutely no excuse for having done nothing else. It would be impossible to characterize their total neglect of the important national interests committed to their charge, in making no provision for what has now occurred, if they were not sincere in their erroneous belief that there was no chance of its occurrence. If they were not dupes they were deceivers. But I do not refer to these incidents for the purpose of denouncing Russian bad faith, or finding fault with Russian ambition. I have nothing whatever to do with Russian morality, and I think it is not the business of any English politician to concern himself about it. I believe I am one of those who have been denounced by the present Cabinet and its Party organs as a Russophobe—which appears to be, in their opinion, one of the most opprobrious epithets that can be applied to a public man; but I am no more a Russophobe than I am a Russophil, and I can assure the House that from me it will not hear this evening a single harsh word upon the conduct of the Russian Government, or upon that of its military authorities. If I notice these Russian pledges, it is only to point out how worthless all such pledges must necessarily be when they are given by a Power situated as Russia is situated in Central Asia. It may be that, when you come to look closely into these pledges, you will find that in all of them Russian statesmen have managed to devise loopholes which will just save the Government that slips through them from the charge of direct falsehood or deliberate bad faith. But that is a question I do not care to discuss. I regard it as a problem in casuistry which has no practical interest. It is very possible that, in every one of these instances, an ingenious casuist may be able to find some such subterfuge or saving clause; but whether he could or could not do so is really of no importance. What is important—and we are inexcusable if we disregard it—is the fact that the whole history of our diplomacy about Merv has added one more to the many illustrations supplied by the general history of the world that diplomatic assurances are of no practical value when they run counter to permanent and well-ascertained national interests, or to deeply-seated national tendencies and passions. To anyone who has watched the course of events in Central Asia—to anyone who knows how, in that country, civilized and uncivilized Powers fray each other, so to speak, at the edges—to anyone who remembers how enterprizing Russian Generals, acting at a distance from St. Petersburg, have invariably been able to commit a possibly reluctant Sovereign to their own projects and proceedings—the conclusion that England and Russia are destined sooner or later to be practically conterminous in Asia must, I think, appear as certain as that water will run downhill when the way is free to it. And to suppose that the most solemn promises will arrest this process is as idle as it was to imagine that the Treaty which closed the Crimean War would exclude the Russian Fleet from the Black Sea one single day later than Russia's first favourable opportunity for breaking through or setting aside the provisions of that Treaty. All that, in such cases, diplomatic assurances can do, is to make those who give them look roguish, and those who require and accept them look foolish. Diplomatic duties will not allow an Ambassador to cross-examine a foreign Minister as if he were a witness come to prove a fraudulent *alibi* at the Old Bailey. The promises or pledges thus obtained can afterwards be easily explained away; and, whether they are or are not explained away, it really matters very little, for in any case they can always be broken at last. My Lords, the game of diplomacy—and I have had something to do with it—has always seemed to me like trying to tie the hands of a juggler with rotten cords. The man who is tied can generally slip out of the knots, and if he cannot slip out of the knots, he has no difficulty in breaking the cords. I dare say some of your Lordships may happen to have witnessed a very popular performance by Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke. It has been repeated over and over again for many years; and yet, on each occasion of its repetition, the public are as much surprised as if such a thing had never happened before, and could never happen again. This performance is called—"A Dark Séance; or the Cabinet Trick." It consists of a limited number of gentlemen—who have never before been so closely connected with each other—getting into a cabinet, where they are apparently bound fast to a certain position, under securities of great seeming stringency. Then, for a while, the light is excluded from the cabinet. The public is not allowed to pry into its secrets. And, shortly afterwards, it is discovered that the occupants of the cabinet have contrived, somehow or other, to shift their position by getting rid of all the securities that bound them. In the same way it appears to me that the political performances of the present Cabinet, which have led up to the present situation, might not be unfairly described as a series of dark séances, each of which, as soon as the light is turned on it, reveals a bewildering change of attitude, accompanied by the mysterious and wholly unexplained disappearance of some trusted national security; and the chief wonder of which is that, after they have been repeated, they still create the same feeling of amazement. Now, in the present case, the securities we have been told to rely upon are two. First come the assurances of a friendly Russia, and then the arms of a free, independent, and united Afghanistan. The Russians are to promise not to have anything to do with the Afghans; and the Afghans are to be in such a position that, if the Russians break this promise, they, the Afghans, can and will—with, perhaps, a little cheap assistance from us—punish the Russians for breaking their promise, and immediately drive them away. Now, I quite agree that a free, independent, united, and friendly Afghanistan would be for us the best of all possible protections against the advance of Russia. My objection to our exclusive reliance on this security is simply that the security does not exist, and that there is not the slightest reason to suppose it will come into existence within any ascertainable time. Let me ask the House to consider the different terms which are used in describing this security. Afghanistan, we are told, will be a firm barrier against Russia, if it is free, if it is independent, if it is united, if it is friendly to England. Well, as for the freedom of Afghanistan, that country certainly is, and it seems likely long to continue, as free as any country can possibly be made by the total absence of all law and of every sort of settled institution. It is free in the sense that each Afghan is practically free to do or own what he pleases at the expense of his neighbours. His neighbours are similarly free to do the same at his expense. And this condition renders such freedom a burden instead of a privilege to the individual, a curse instead of a blessing to the country. Well, then, let us next examine what constitutes the independence and the union of that country. Practically speaking, Afghanistan is, as it ever has been, nothing more than a loose agglomeration of independent tribes, over whom the Ameer, for the time being, exercises by sheer military force just so much authority as the strength of that force, or the fear of the cruelty he may be able to exercise by its means, may enable him to exert. But there is no permanent settled union, no national homogeneity, not even any tribal sympathy between Cabul, Herat, and Candahar, to say nothing of less conspicuous sub-divisions of the country. In a word, there is absolutely nothing which can be regarded as a national incorporation of the various Afghan Provinces into a single body capable of united action, and there is no probability that such a body will ever exist. My Lords, you may talk as you please of a united and independent Afghanistan; but the very phrase is contradictory. The near approach to independence of each other which obtains between the different Afghan tribes and cities is practically inconsistent with their efficient union; and any such union would destroy the only independence they value. As to the friendliness of Afghanistan, I will only say that I fear this is also, for all practical purposes, equally chimerical; and, if we trust only to that, I am afraid the time will soon arrive when we shall regret having done so. To all Asiatics, Russia's attitude and policy are much more intelligible than our own. They inspire fear, but they also inspire confidence. Russia is an aggressive Power. She can at any moment offer to the Afghans more than we can, for she can offer to them the plunder of India. England has long since reached the limits of her Empire, and cannot offer to the Afghans anything they care to have; unless, indeed, we were to offer to their Ruler for the time being an offensive and defensive alliance, which would practically put it in his power to embroil us with Russia whenever he pleased. For these reasons, my Lords, I look upon the security of a united, independent, and friendly Afghanistan as equivalent to the security of Russian pledges. The two securities, each of them by itself, and both of them taken together, are absolutely worthless. But on this point I wish to guard myself against being misunderstood. I certainly do not believe that Afghanistan, if left to itself, can ever be united, as well as independent, or that it can ever be a purely self-acting barrier between us and Russia. But I am far from saying that the relations between England and Afghanistan might not have been such as to make the Afghan Kingdom a real barrier, resting on foundations laid in time by our own prescience and energy. I believe that that might have been effected in 1873, when the late Ameer of Cabul was seriously alarmed by the advance of Russia. He then urged on our attention the dangers to which, in his opinion, both Afghanistan and India would be exposed by her advance to the very point at which her power is now permanently established, and he implored us to make at once practical provision, based on definite written engagements with him, for his protection against those dangers. Unfortunately, however, the Viceroy of

India was then instructed to put him off with assurances that no such dangers existed, and that there was no occasion for us to afford him the only sort of protection which appeared to him of any use. I do not wish to revive extinct controversies. But I shall never cease to believe that when the Government then ridiculed the fears, and rejected the overtures of Shere Ali, it necessarily threw him into the arms of Russia, and forfeited our last chance of really erecting in Afghanistan that barrier on which it would now be insanity for us to place any reliance, because, in fact, no such barrier exists. But then it may be said—"After all, what probability is there that Russia will now interfere in Afghanistan; and what can it matter to us if she does interfere?" My Lords, I think that, in part, I have already answered this question. But I cannot too emphatically insist upon the fact, which plainly stares us in the face, that if the Russian Frontier is now conterminous, or all but conterminous, with the Afghan Frontier at its weakest point, Russia must interfere in Afghanistan. She will be compelled to interfere in Afghanistan. She will have both the right and the obligation to do so; and, therefore, whatever new policy Her Majesty's Government may now adopt in reference to this altered state of things, the old assumption that Afghanistan is outside the sphere of Russian influence can no longer be entertained as the basis of that policy. As matters now stand, you might as well try to keep the influence of Russia from penetrating into Afghanistan as to prevent the wind from blowing through an empty keyhole. This is the one supremely important fact on which I wish to fix the attention of the House. We are bound to bear in mind that in that part of the world every man is a soldier and a nomad. The most paltry incident, the most petty ambition, may produce disturbances, capable at any moment of growing into civil war and revolution. You may as well expect Northern and Western Afghanistan to remain out of the sphere of the influence legitimately belonging to any civilized Power who is mistress of the Merv oasis, as you might expect Candahar and Cabul to be beyond the influence of such a Power if it were established at Herat. The strength of this natural and inevitable influence it is difficult, of course, to measure. It must vary from time to time; it must depend on the nature of events. But it is already great enough to render credible the rumours lately current that the Ameer feels so strong an objection to being placed between the upper and the nether millstone, that he is not at all unlikely to abdicate and retire into private life, unless he can obtain from us enormous subsidies and far-reaching promises, which it would, in my opinion, be most unwise to give him. The new state of things created by Russia's acquisition of the Merv oasis amounts practically to this—Russia has thereby acquired the means and incurred the necessity of intermeddling how and when she pleases in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and in a manner which we have practically no power either to prevent or control. For whatever she may please to regard as our good behaviour towards her she has obtained efficient material guarantees, while for her good behaviour to us we have no such guarantees; for neither diplomatic assurances on her part, nor any independent efforts which can reasonably be expected from the Afghans, will afford us the smallest security against the danger to which we shall stand exposed if Russia, whenever it suits her policy to do so, should bring to bear against British India the cupidity of the Afghans, enforced and supported by all the nomad Cavalry of the deserts of Central Asia. The very least of the immediate consequences of this serious change in our situation is, that you will henceforth be compelled, if you abide by your duties, to make a considerable permanent increase in the number of English troops you keep in India, and that will put a new and serious heavy drain upon the financial as well as the military resources of both India and the Empire. Such is the state of things to which the policy, or rather the impolicy, and the improvidence of the present Government have reduced us. Let me now turn to that other policy which was commenced a short time ago, continued under great difficulties for but a very few years, renounced in 1880, and reversed in 1881. That policy was based upon the principle I have already described. It accepted, as an inevitable fact, the worthlessness of Russian assurances, and the chimerical character of a united, independent, and friendly Afghanistan, capable of serving as a self-acting barrier between us and Russia. An Afghanistan, united in its dependence on the organized protection of England, would no doubt have placed us in a position involving great responsibilities; but the responsibilities would, I conceive, have been more than compensated by the practical advantages. That position, however, was no longer open to us, owing to the policy of our Predecessors, which had rejected the chance and destroyed the conditions of it. We therefore considered that our only solid security against the natural consequences of a Russian advance must be found in a position both military and political, which, whenever the inevitable meeting should take place between the two great nations in Central Asia, would enable us to accept it without undignified trepidation. The House need not be afraid that I am going to inflict upon it any discussion about the Afghan War. But, be the merits and causes of that war what they may, one thing is certain—its result not only left us in possession of Candahar; it also left us pledged to the inhabitants of that town and district not to allow them to pass again under the rule of Cabul. And this was not all. The policy pursued in Beloochistan by the late Government of India—a policy which at the time was condemned by noble Lords opposite almost as severely as they condemned the Afghan War itself—secured to us three several advantages. That policy gave us, first of all, the command of the Bolan Pass; it gave us, secondly, the possession of the fort of Quetta; and it gave us, thirdly, in the Khan of Khelat, an ally who showed himself faithful to us in very trying circumstances, and who could therefore be trusted. These minor points of our much-abused policy—these three incomplete results of it—are the only ones not irretrievably surrendered by our Successors. And I believe it was with great difficulty that the noble Marquess the Governor General of India (the Marquess of Ripon) was induced to retain them, in reluctant compliance with the strong remonstrances of the officers of his own Government, and the people of Beloochistan themselves. But what has been the practical result of sparing even thus much of the policy so severely censured some years ago by Her Majesty's present Ministers? I accept the account given of it by the President of the Local Government Board. This is what Sir Charles W. Dilke said of it the other day—

> "I think I can only inform the House further that we stand in a stronger position towards Afghanistan and Beloochistan, and in a more satisfactory position on the North-Western Frontier of Afghanistan, than we have probably ever stood in time past. We have now, by the wish of the people of the country, formally taken over the Government of Quetta, and a formal arrangement has been made."

My Lords, it was not in a hostile manner to the people of Beloochistan, nor was it without their absolute approval and support—indeed, their earnest entreaty—that the late Government of India decided on that occupation of Quetta for which it was censured by the present Government. The statement of the President of the Local Government Board continues thus—

> "The friendliness of the people of Beloochistan now gives us entire control of the Bolan Pass, and that road is now perfectly assured, and is likely to remain tranquil."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 1770.)

I believe this statement to be as true as it is important. But it is equally true that, had it not been for the policy which the late Government was at the time so severely censured for adopting, we should at this moment have had no garrison at Quetta, no friendly relations with the people of Beloochistan, and no command over the Bolan Pass. On that point I have yet another word to say. Since the time when noble Lords opposite were in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility, they have learnt a little from experience. I have no doubt they are learning more every day; but their education is not yet complete. They may not believe it, but I must tell them what is undoubtedly believed by their own authorities in Beloochistan, that had they kept faith with the people of Candahar, as they have been persuaded to keep faith with the people of Quetta—had they continued our protective occupation of that town and district, instead of handing them over to Cabul—we should now be established at Candahar just as securely as we are established at Quetta, and with just as absolute an approval and support on the part of the population concerned. The railway which we began to Candahar might by this time have been completed, and what would then have been our position at this moment? With a strong British force at Candahar, and its communications with the Indus fully secured, we might have laughed at any talk of danger, or even inconvenience, from Russia's occupation of Merv; and we could have viewed with undisturbed equanimity an event which is now again, we are told, to be the subject of abortive and humiliating communication with the Russian Government. For it would be impossible for an enemy, whether European or Afghan, to lay regular siege to Quetta, and equally impossible for him to march through the passes into India, leaving Quetta held by a British force in his rear. My Lords, it is certainly remarkable that the very persons who blamed us for going to Quetta and blamed us for going to Candahar—the very persons who gave up Candahar, and who, as one of their arguments for giving it up, put forward the remark that if we kept Candahar we might thereby give Russia a pretext for advancing upon Merv, should now be consoling themselves, and trying to console us, for Russia having taken permanent possession of Merv, by the reflection that we have still got possession of Quetta and control over the Bolan Pass. I cannot help saying that to them and their policy we owe just as little thanks for the possession of Quetta as we do for the abandonment of Candahar. And here I come at last to the most serious and important question of all. The policy of the present Government having drifted us into the position I have described, what ought now to be done in order to diminish the acknowledged weakness and to mitigate the prospective danger of that position? Upon this question Her Majesty's Government have hitherto been singularly reticent and mysterious—so reticent that, in order to obtain any indication of their present intentions, we can only turn to their previous utterances; and these, I suppose, we may assume to be trustworthy sources of enlightenment, as in other mattersthey are never tired of assuring us that their policy is neither inconsistent nor vacillating; that it has never changed; and that, having on former occasions explained it so clearly, they are under no obligations to explain it again. I shall, therefore, make no apology for reading, on a matter of such supreme importance, a remarkable statement of the steps recommended eight years ago, as those which ought to be taken in the present emergency, by the noble Earl who is now First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook). That noble Earl was then Viceroy of India, and in a Government of India despatch, addressed by him in 1875 to my noble Friend the noble Marquess behind me (the Marquess of Salisbury), he made these remarkable recommendations, which, I am bound to say, are very explicit as to what should be done if Russia were to take possession of Merv—

> "We have before stated to Her Majesty's Government our apprehension that the assumption by Russia of authority over the whole Turcoman country would create alarm in Afghanistan; and we think it desirable to express our opinion of the course which should be adopted if it should take place. It would then become necessary to give additional and more specific assurances to the Ruler of Afghanistan that we are prepared to assist him to defend Afghanistan against attack from without. It would probably be desirable to enter into a Treaty engagement with him, and the establishment of a British Resident at Herat would be the natural consequence of such an engagement and of the nearer approach of the Russian Frontier. We think that these would be the measures best calculated to avert any dangers that may ensue from a Russian advance to Merv, and that they should be adopted when the necessity for them arises."—[Afghanistan, 1878, p.p. 134-5.]

I do not know whether these words represent the present opinion of the noble Earl, or the present intentions of that consistent and unvacillating Cabinet of which he is so influential a Member. I have no hesitation, however, in expressing my own regretful conviction that the steps recommended by the noble Earl are now impracticable. If taken now, they would be taken too late, and if taken too late they would be of no advantage; they would give no security, and they would add to our danger. If the noble Earl was of opinion that those steps ought to be taken in an emergency foreseen by all but himself and his Colleagues—the annexation of Merv by Russia—he ought to have prepared the way for taking them when he had the opportunity of doing so. I should like to learn from the noble Earl, in the course of this evening, how he would propose to protect a British Resident at Herat, more than 600 miles away from the nearest railway communication with

India, more than 500 miles away from the nearest British garrison, and in the midst of a lawless and turbulent population? I should like to know how he would practically fulfil the engagements of his proposed Treaty for the protection of Herat, when he and his Colleagues have not even ventured to keep a force at Candahar? An expedition to Herat would now virtually be an expedition from the Indus. It would be exceedingly costly and difficult. It would require an enormous force. That force would be completely isolated from its base; and its communication in the rear would be not only imperfect, but very dangerous. My Lords, I know not what steps, either in this direction or in any other, may have been under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government during the last three weeks; but, looking at the invariable results of their policy during the last three months in almost every part of the world, I must confess that it has often occurred to me that there is one step which might be taken—I will not say effectively, but at least very appropriately and characteristically—by the present Government. That step would be to create at once a new Department of the Foreign Office and a new Department of the War Office devoted to the careful preparation of measures to be taken only when too late. I have no doubt that these two Departments would be the busiest in Downing Street, and that they would absorb a large proportion of the funds annually voted by Parliament for the maintenance of interests depending on the management of our foreign and military affairs. I fully recognize, however, and have no wish to minimize, the extreme difficulty of the position in which Her Majesty's Ministers are placed, and in which, through their policy, all of us are placed in regard to the present state of affairs in Central Asia. Perhaps we should be too sanguine if we expected that the Ministers who have got us into that position will tell us to-night how they intend to get us out of it; but it will at least be some satisfaction if their language is such as to show that the real difficulties and the real facts of the situation are no longer deliberately ignored, and that they are at last seriously recognized in a practical spirit by those who must bear, in a very special degree, the responsibility of practically dealing with them. The extent to which this situation fundamentally differs from the state of things which preceded it may be plainly stated in a very few words. In the first place, whereas, up to the present moment, it has been agreed all round that Afghanistan must remain outside the sphere of Russia's legitimate influence, events have now brought that country unavoidably within the sphere of such influence. In the next place, whereas a united, independent, and friendly Afghanistan would be the best barrier between England and Russia in Central Asia, the plain fact is that the constituent parts of that country cannot be united unless they cease to be independent; and that, in the present state of things, it is equally impossible to unite them in any serious dependence upon England; while, as for their future friendship, Russia can now hold out to it inducements infinitely greater than any which it is in our own power to offer. Lastly, my Lords, whereas a military position might have been taken up, and actually was taken up, which, if retained, would have rendered us justified in viewing the advance of Russia with comparative indifference, by far the most important part of that position has been abandoned, and it is difficult to see how it can now be regained. On the other hand, the less important part of that position still remains to us; and that, so far as I see, is the single consolatory reflection upon which our minds can rest in reviewing the state of things which has been brought about and the anxious position in which we have been placed by the policy of the present Government. The noble Earl concluded by moving for the Papers of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Papers showing what communications have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, about Merv and Afghanistan, since the year 1881."—(*The Earl of Lytton.*)

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, I hope it will not be inconvenient to the House, nor altogether unfavourable to the important discussion which has been raised, if I venture to intervene between the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Lytton) and the answer which will be made by Her Majesty's Government to the noble Earl, who has made, as he always does, a very eloquent and able speech. In many parts of that speech I, for one, fully concur; but I must express my regret that the noble Earl should have thought it well to treat the subject so much with reference to the details of a past controversy which most of us may have forgotten. The House will hear nothing from me to-night which may lead noble Lords to enter into this debate in a Party spirit. It is my desire to raise it to a somewhat higher level than that of mere Party, and I would ask the House, in this new point of departure in the history of Russian advances in Central Asia, to consider what are the consequences of this advance, and what is the policy we ought to pursue. And I think, my Lords, we may enter upon this discussion under peculiarly favourable circumstances. A few years ago it would have seemed incredible that such an event as Russia taking possession of Merv should have occurred, and that so little public excitement should have been raised upon the subject. If it had happened a few years ago every paper would have been ringing with it; and I doubt very much whether any Government could have withstood the pressure which public feeling would have raised against them in reference to this act of the Russian Government. And yet the news is now received, I do not say without some feeling of misgiving, but certainly with no feeling of alarm, and very little feeling of irritation. How does this come about? Partly, I think, it is due to the fact that the public mind in England cannot be excited to a high point on foreign politics, except as to particular transactions in one portion of the world. The public mind is engrossed, and justly engrossed, with our difficult and dangerous position elsewhere, in Egypt; but I trust that the calmness with which the annexation of Merv has been received is due also to the calmer temper and the more just appreciation of the real importance of such an event as this. Let me recall the attention of the House for a few minutes to the history of this great subject of the advance of Russia in the East. During the last half-century eminent men have been directing attention to the gigantic strides of Russia; but, in former years, almost all those strides were made at the expense of the two Empires of Turkey and Persia. It was not until 1864 that Russia began those great advances in Central Asia which have so often alarmed Anglo-Indian statesmen. In that year Prince Gortchakoff issued a celebrated Circular despatch to all the Courts of Europe, explaining the conduct and designs of Russia in regard to Central Asia. Somehow, I hardly know how, that despatch was accepted as a reassuring one. It was so spoken of by Sir Henry Rawlinson; but, looking into its terms, instead of being in reality reassuring, it contained announcements of principles and intentions which were nothing short of a declaration of war against all the Khanates of Central Asia, for they amounted to this—that Russia would not tolerate robber States in her neighbourhood. As a matter of fact, the Khanates of Central Asia were "robber States," for they lived by robbery, man stealing, and slave stealing. The second announcement made in this reassuring despatch was that when a robber State was to be punished, it was not sufficient to occupy their territory by a temporary possession, but they must be finally subdued. And, lastly, there was a distinct intimation on the part of Russia that, in the whole of the matter, she would be governed, not by reclamations of other States, but by her own interests and her own honour. The principles embodied in that despatch were those on which Russia has consistently acted ever since; and I say that if statesmen in Europe and England had looked closely at it and read between the lines they would have seen the inevitable effect of the operation of the principles laid down. As Sir Henry Rawlinson had stated, the ink was scarcely dry with which it was written before the advance began, and in the five years between the beginning of 1864 and the end of 1868, Russia had actually conquered and annexed the whole of the vast territory which stretches from the Ural to the head waters of the Jaxartes. Russia finally conquered Samarcand, and that position commands Bokhara, which is a very important point. With regard to it, the noble Earl, in his speech, implied that, for the first time, Russia would touch Afghanistan in becoming possessed of Merv. That is a complete mistake. In having possession of Bokhara she was already a coterminous Power with Afghanistan. When I first went to the India Office I found that Lord Lawrence had directed the attention of Mr. Disraeli's Government to the advances made by Russia, and intimated that the time had probably come for some understanding with that Power on the subject. This proposition was dealt with in a despatch, dated December 26, 1867, by Sir Stafford Northcote, who said—

> "Upon this point Her Majesty's Government see no reason for any uneasiness or for any jealousy. The conquests which Russia has made, and apparently is still making in Central Asia, appear to them to be the natural result of the circumstances in which she finds herself placed, and to afford no ground whatever for representations indicative of suspicion or alarm on the part of this country. Friendly communications have at various times passed between the two Governments on the subject, and should an opportunity offer, Her Majesty's Government will avail themselves of it for the purpose of obviating any possible danger of misunderstanding either with respect to the proceedings of Russia or to those of England. This is all that it appears necessary or desirable to do."—[Afghanistan (1878), pp. 25-6.]

That was the opinion of my Predecessor in Office at the time with regard to the advance of Russia in Central Asia, which brought that Power up to the borders of Afghanistan. When, under the threats of noble Lords opposite, Russia began to prepare for war in the East, it is well known that one of the principal columns which Russia prepared was prepared on the basis of Bokhara. It is, therefore, clear that, on that basis and at that time, she had become a Power capable of doing a serious danger to us in India. Do let us remember who were the public men in England who held power during the five years I have mentioned. It so happened that there was a very rapid succession of Cabinets. First there was Lord Palmerston's, then Lord Russell's and the Earl of Derby's, and, lastly, Mr. Disraeli's Government. Now, I think I may assume that up to that point opinion was clearly united. I never doubted for a moment that it would be very wise and expedient to have political Agents in the principal towns of Afghanistan, if those Agents could be received with goodwill by the people; and I think there was nothing unreasonable in the desire to get reliable information in that way if it could be done. But I decline to follow the noble Earl in the attack on my noble Friend the late Governor General of India (the Earl of Northbrook) and myself who was then Secretary of State. That question has been argued in Parliament and has been decided in Parliament, and I wish to go on to another question and try to establish some unity of feeling in regard to it. What is the position which we have got to now? The advances of Russia in those five years were upon what may be called the upper line of attack—I mean of possible attack on India—the line of advance along the Oxus and Jaxartes; and the whole of these two valleys were practically subject to Russia. It has always been considered by those who have looked carefully into this matter that if ever there be an invasion of India by Russia it will not be mainly from Bokhara, but from the Caspian base and through Persia. I believe that no great expeditionary force capable of troubling us in India can advance to our Frontier without the material aid and assistance of Persia. The real alarm that has always been felt in regard to Merv is that there would be an advance of Russia towards the Persian boundary. The pressure of Russia would be exercised on Persia, and not on Afghanistan. I listened carefully to the speech of the noble Earl opposite to-night. He began by saying that he would give the House an idea of what importance Merv was. I wanted to know more about the matter than most people do know. What are the resources of Merv, and what is its geographical position? I have heard one description given of it by the noble Earl that I believe is accurate. The noble Earl says it is an oasis surrounded on all sides by desert; it is a mere green spot in the midst of one of the most hideous deserts in all Asia. But, in order to give us a truer description and a clearer idea of the great importance of Merv, the noble Earl said it was on the way between two great routes to the North. He did not, however, give us any idea of the population of Merv. We know that, at a very ancient period of history, it was the capital of a powerful and flourishing State; and it is just possible that, if it comes under a civilized Power, and immense works of irrigation are executed, it might again be the seat of a teeming population. But now, even while admitting my own ignorance as regards the subject, I doubt if Merv could turn out anything like 10,000 men. If the noble Earl can contradict that, he knows more of its present population than I do. But, whatever it may be, we have lately had the letters of newspaper correspondents and other travellers, and we know that it is a place capable of great fertility, producing melons of very great size. That does not tell us much as to the military power it is capable of giving to Russia; but Merv is a mere spot, an oasis surrounded by deserts; and as to the roads of which the noble Earl speaks to the North, I have read the account given by a military writer who took the route to the North near Charjui, to the nearest ford on the Oxus; and his description of a march of 230 or 240 miles gives you the idea that it is one of the most wretched and dangerous deserts in Central Asia, the water, where water is to be found, and that only at great distances, being of the very bitterest kind. It is, I think, perfectly certain that if Russia ever invaded India, she would never send an army, or even a detachment from the Oxus through Merv. I believe that Russian advance of a serious kind must come through the fertile districts of Persia; it must come by Meshed and Sarakhs, and have the resources of that country at its command. I am not prepared to say that, at some future time, such an expedition may not be taken. All I say is, that it must be done with the complicity and with the resources of the Persian Government, and that our best agency should be established in Persia. I believe that all the objects aimed at by the late Government in seeking to establish Agents in Afghanistan will be better accomplished by having a good Minister established at the Court of Teheran, and Agents at Meshed and other places in Persia. Another point in regard to Merv the noble Earl took care not to mention. I do not know, however, that he had any object in concealing it, because his theory—a very reasonable one—is that the advance of Russia is inevitable, and that all her promises are so much waste paper — so much wasted breath. I believe them to be so. All that I want the House to understand clearly is, that no charge of breach of faith or of any absolute promise can be brought against Russia in this matter. I speak for myself—I do not speak for the Government—but some years ago, when I looked very carefully into the matter, I found not one single Russian promise, so-called, that was not so fortified—and especially that celebrated despatch of Prince Gortchakoff's to which I have referred—by contingencies, that they would have a perfect right, if those contingencies arose, to go forward whenever they pleased. As to Merv, the noble Earl forgot to mention that of all the robber hordes in Central Asia the Merv Turcomans are about the most bloodthirsty and the very worst. I am told that when Sir John M'Neill was Minister in Persia, for many years he had constant appeals addressed to him as to the rescue of captive Persian and Russian subjects who had been kidnapped by these Turcoman hordes. Russia, therefore, has had a positive grievance in this—that the commerce of Central Asia could not be conducted so long as these people were not subdued. I must say, with all my determination—as strong as that of any other person can be—to maintain our Indian Empire, it is against my conscience, against my belief of the truth, to say that the safety of our Indian Empire depends upon maintaining this robber horde at Merv. I have, myself, for many years read language of constant remonstrance which has been addressed to the Russian Government on the subject of Central Asia. Some of that language was addressed to them by the noble Earl the present Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby), in despatches giving distinct warning to Russia, not so much on the noble Earl's own behalf, as on account of the susceptibilities of the people of this country, to the effect that any advance of Russia in that region would be considered as alarming, and as calculated to create difficulties in the relations between the two Powers. I frankly confess that I have gone the length of feeling that that language was language which it was not worthy of this country to address to Russia. In the first place, I did not believe in the danger; and, in the second place, I did not believe in the justice of those remonstrances. I have thought that, in the natural course of events, Russia must compel the Turcomans to give up their kidnapping and marauding pursuits, which are their only means of living, and that that would mean nothing less than the subjection of the country to Russia. I watched very closely the speech of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of

Lytton) to learn what he himself would have done in the present circumstances; whether he would have threatened Russia with the wrath of England, or made serious menaces which he might not have been able to carry out; but the noble Earl most carefully avoided committing himself to any resolution on the point. Let me read to the House the opinion on this point of a very distinguished man, no less than Sir Bartle Frere, and I cannot mention his name without expressing the deep sorrow with which we all have heard of his serious illness. I do not know if there is any man in public life with whose opinions I have more widely differed than Sir Bartle Frere; but I have sat with him in council, I have read his despatches, I have observed his public career, and this I will say—that I know no abler man, no abler public servant, no man with a more extended knowledge, and, above all—for this is what we value our Indian officers for—I never met a man who had more of the courage of his opinions, and who was more able or willing to assume the responsibility that his opinions might involve, and I trust that he will soon be restored to health. Well, here is the opinion of Sir Bartle Frere, who, as your Lordships know, was an advocate of what is called a forward policy in India. He says—

> "As for making an advance upon Merv by Russia a *casus belli*, I do not think the proposal will stand examination. The place is nothing to us except as a step towards Herat and Cabul, and it is not a necessary step to either; but to prohibit the Russians from taking it might, in the event of their regarding our prohibition, force them to turn it, and thus delay for some time the extermination of hordes of robbers and man-stealers, whose intervention between us and Russia must ever be a fruitful source of misunderstanding. But the Russians will not, or, more correctly speaking, they cannot, stop; they cannot regard any mere threats or prohibitions of ours of that kind."

What, in those circumstances, ought to be the policy of this country? The noble Earl spoke as if the traditional policy that had existed for a long time—that of maintaining an independent Afghanistan—was now out of the question. I have not seen the despatches that have lately come with respect to the state of Afghanistan; but I do not think it is impossible to restore Afghanistan to a sufficient degree of strength to be a very good bulwark against Russia. It is a difficult country to enter, and, as we found the other day in the war, it is a country peopled with most gallant tribes, who, on several occasions, gave our troops—the most disciplined troops in Europe—almost enough to do to combat with them. I do not despair of our traditional policy; but if the Afghans are alarmed at the progress of Russia, if they should change their minds in respect of receiving officers at Cabul and Herat, I see nothing to prevent the Government adopting such a policy. If the Government are clear that Russia is making for Persia along the Merv oasis, or in any other direction, with a view to making that country either wholly or in part the basis of military operations, we shall then be entirely in a new position, and able to take our own measures in Afghanistan. But, my Lords, this I will say—that although, in my estimation, the war waged by noble Lords opposite was not, in the circumstances, a just war, yet I am not prepared to say that it has been wholly without some good effect. My Lords, there is no use disguising the fact that the power of England in the East is a great power. It is well that the half-civilized tribes of that part of the world should know that we are their masters, and that when we like to take a country like Afghanistan with the resources of our civilization, we can do it without any serious sacrifice to our resources. And, my Lords, this is the reason—to touch for a moment upon another subject—this is the reason why I cannot sympathize with some of the language which has been held by some noble Lords on this side of the House in regard to what has been called the massacres which have lately taken place in Northern Africa on the Nile. My Lords, it is a matter of great moment to the civilized world—whatever may be the policy of the present Government—that these Mahomedans in Africa should know that we can and will beat them. Depend upon it, we may admire their gallantry as much as we please—and no man can admire their gallantry more than I do—but, nevertheless, it is perfectly consistent with that admiration that we should wish to defeat them. We have defeated them, and they have learned a lesson they will not forget. Whatever may be the future policy of this Government or any other future Government in Afghanistan, it is not by any means an unimportant circumstance that we have had a successful campaign against them. Now, I am not going to dictate to the Government, or even to suggest to them the course they should take in relation to this matter. Whatever that course may be, there is one thing which I earnestly urge upon the Government, and it is this—that they shall not go to Russia and ask for new assurances. I quite agree with the noble Earl opposite that it is not a dignified attitude, and, however sincere the Cabinet of St. Petersburg may be in giving its promises, which is quite possible, that Cabinet has not the power always to control events, so as to be able to fulfil them. Therefore, the promises given are not worth the breath with which they are spoken. Whatever may be the policy, let it be independent of them. There may, however, be negotiations between us and Russia in regard to limitations of territory. That is the legitimate thing, and the proposition now made by the noble Earl may or may not be true as a general doctrine; but we have promised her independence to Afghanistan, and I trust that we shall never break that promise, unless Afghanistan commits an act of treachery against us. That is the only ground—and it is a sufficient one—on which I would respect the independence of Afghanistan. Now, my Lords, I hope the House will not think that I have spoken in a spirit either of what the noble Earl would call a Russophobe or a Russophil. I do not know why anyone should suspect me of being a Russophil. I have the honour—and a great honour I deem it—of being one of the very few survivors of the Cabinet which fought the Crimean War. Unlike many other Members of the Liberal Party, who are never tired of denouncing that war as either a great folly or a great crime, I have never been ashamed of the part which the English Government took on that occasion. We did not fight for the resurrection of Turkey. I, for one, never would. We fought for the great principle that, whatever the fate of Turkey might be, it was not to rest in the hands of Russia, but it was a question to be decided by Europe—not by Russia, not by secret Treaties and Conventions, giving her the power to do what she pleases when she pleases. That was the principle for which we fought, and it is the principle which I, for one, should be ready to fight for again. But, my Lords, as regards Central Asia, I have had this feeling—that Russia is there, at least, as a civilizing Power. The noble Earl opposite, in his speech, admitted that there is no other Power which can reduce these robber tribes. There is no other Power that can rescue and raise that great region of the world, the source and origin of our own race, from the misery and the degradation which has long afflicted it; and, although, as compared with us, and as regards Europe, Russia is not a civilized Power, in that country she is. But, my Lords, when I come to contemplate such an event as the possible invasion of British India by Russia, then again I turn round and say that such an event would be almost as wretched an event to anticipate as any that had ever happened in history; in fact, a Russian invasion of England would be almost as bad. Such an event would destroy the civilization which we have established in that part of the world, and also the Empire of which we are justly proud. I have to say, in conclusion, that whatever be the measures the Government may take for securing our Indian Frontier, they will receive the hearty support of the united people of this country.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: My Lords, I shall not detain the House any length of time by commenting upon the speech of the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll), with a great part of which I concur. I understand the noble Duke to advance the argument that England should show herself prepared to defend India, and not to be deterred from making whatever preparations may be necessary to secure it from Russian ambition. I am not going to contemplate that as a very near process, nor as one that Russia has in contemplation. I look upon the question of the advances of Russia in Central Asia mainly from the point of view of the effect it will produce on the people of India in weakening the Government there, and giving the impression that England is a receding Power, and Russia an advancing Power. Nor am I disposed to forget that some such feeling has been created in the Indian mind. I do not lay great stress upon the Indian Press; but this I do say—that already, in taking up this subject, the newspaper Press has made numberless attacks on British power, and it is said that the British power is waning before the advancing power of Russia. Sir Bartle Frere used stronger language than any used by the noble Duke. He stated that it was inevitable that Russia should advance until she met with some impassable barrier, or until she came in contact with some Power whom she had reason to fear, and who might become conterminous with that Power, taking under its Government the tribes then on the Russian Frontier. One thing is obviously necessary—if Afghanistan is to be protected from Russia, and if Afghanistan is indispensable for the purposes of our defence as regards India, we cannot leave that country in such a position as will enable her to send her Border Tribes into Russian territory. If we consider that the Borders of Afghanistan are to be made practically the Borderland of Russia, and that the internal affairs of Afghanistan are not to be interfered with, it becomes an absolute necessity that, either by force, or in other ways, England should take upon herself the restriction of the Frontier Tribes over which she exercises control from becoming an invading Power against Russia, and so bring Russia nearer to ourselves. I am not going on this occasion to follow the consideration of what took place formerly. It is no use at this time to refer to the past, because at this moment we really want some sort of knowledge as to what is going on. Merv may be the unimportant place which the noble Duke opposite has described it to be at present; but no one knows how strong it may not be made from a strategical point of view in the hands of Russia. The fact that it has once been a great city shows that, at least, under a civilizing Power, it may suffice to maintain a very considerable force. Now that Russia has come to the weak point of the Afghan Frontier, she has, by their recent submission, relieved herself from the pressure of the Turcoman Tribes which could have been brought against her. Irrespective of the line of march that Russia may adopt in the face of an invasion of India, she has, by subduing these tribes, made herself safe on the North from any danger which could have arisen. I quite agree with my noble Friend (the Earl of Lytton) that an independent Afghanistan has become almost an impossibility. Although it was so to some extent and for a short period under Dost Mahomed, it never existed in the the time of Shere Ali; and Abdurrahman at the present moment is not strong. I speak, of course, with great diffidence as to his position, because since 1881 we are almost without Papers; and I shall, therefore, press the noble Earl opposite that we should be, as early as possible, furnished with full information as to what has taken place since we withdrew from Afghanistan and left Abdurrahman with a sort of Sovereignty over the country. I also agree with the noble Duke opposite that all we do must be done with reliance on the right hand of England alone. If Russian promises are made, they must be thrust aside as of no consequence, bearing in mind that Russia is pushed forward by inevitable circumstances over which she has no control up to a certain point, where, I am afraid, she must come into collision with England. That point once attained, there will be no other means of restraining her advance but such force as we may possess.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I quite agree with a great deal that has been said by the noble Duke and the noble Viscount. I agree that it is essential, in dealing with the very grave and difficult question regarding our position in Afghanistan, that we should take an independent line, relying on ourselves, and not merely on any assurances which we may obtain from any Foreign Powers. Without wishing to say anything derogatory of a Power with whom we are on friendly terms, I cannot say that I have ever thought we ought to rest much on the assurances we have received. It has been truly pointed out that Russia is pushed forward by a variety of reasons; and, whether we receive assurances or not, we should, in directing our policy, look at facts and accommodate ourselves to them, and not to what Foreign Powers may say. I do not, however, go quite so far as the noble Earl (the Earl of Lytton), who said diplomatic communications were perfectly useless. I cannot go so far as that, because, especially between civilized Powers, there must be, from time to time, understandings and communications with regard to matters of common interest, and we have reasonable ground for expecting that those communications will be of a certain weight at the time in disclosing to us the policy which a friendly Government intends to pursue. That is a very different matter from placing reliance on those communications in the sense of neglecting measures of precaution which our own interests require, which would be certainly most imprudent. But now in regard to what has taken place at Merv. I have certainly never been what is called a Russophobe; but, on the other hand, I have never been one of those who can regard with indifference the advance of Russia in Asia, and for this reason—not because it indicates an intention on her part to undertake a great invasion of India, but because I believe that the approach of a great Power near our Empire in India must have a disturbing effect on our position in Asia. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. It may not be a hostile approach, and it may ultimately have no injurious effect, but reflection upon the position which we hold and which Russia holds in Asia will show that an advance which brings these two great Empires into contact is an event of considerable interest and importance. The noble Earl who opened this discussion naturally recurred to the past, and I must refer to some of the observations which he made. He spoke of the policy of relying on the assurances of Russia; and, secondly, of the policy which consisted in the maintenance of a friendly and an independent Afghanistan which might be a barrier to Russia. Those were the two alternatives he brought before us. Now, as to the first, I think I have said enough. There is no great difference of opinion between us. As regards the second point we differ entirely. I am quite sure that the policy which he pursued would have rendered it still more difficult than it was to set up the strong, friendly, and independent Afghanistan of which we used to hear a great deal. But I admit that the proceedings of the noble Earl have not had all the injurious effects that might have been expected from them. It has been said that Abdurrahman is a Ruler so weak that he exercises no real authority in Afghanistan. Now, from the communications that reach me, I am able to state that that is a very exaggerated view. To say that Abdurrahman is as strong a Ruler as Dost Mahomed would be absurd; but he exercises strong authority over a considerable part of Afghanistan, and a certain authority over the whole of it. Our communications with Abdurrahman are such as to show that he is animated by very friendly feelings towards us. The noble Earl's (the Earl of Lytton's) policy was one very intelligible and very ingenious. It was that of destroying entirely this strong and united Afghanistan; it was to occupy Candahar with British troops, and then Herat was to be given over to Persia. Now, of all the devices I ever heard of for facilitating the advance of Russia towards India I never heard of one more calculated to do so than the handing of Herat over to Persia. If that had been adopted you would practically have brought Russia into very dangerous contact with the Afghan territories nearer India, and certainly would never have attained the object you have in view—the strengthening of India against Russia. When we came into Office we gave up Candahar, and I think that was a wise policy. Why so? Because if we had retained possession of Candahar we should have had an unfriendly Afghanistan, and an unfriendly Afghanistan would greatly increase our difficulties in that quarter; and the cardinal point in the policy to be pursued is, in my opinion, to secure Afghanistan being on friendly terms. To occupy Candahar was to take the course most likely to prevent the possibility of our having a real friendly alliance with Afghanistan. The present Government, therefore, on coming into Office retired from Candahar. Lord Hartington, my Predecessor at the India Office, at the same time, recognized that Afghanistan was a country over which we must exercise a certain amount of influence and control, and we gave an engagement to Abdurrahman that if he were attacked England would assist him in his defence. That is a very important engagement. It was, in substance, the same as the promise given to Shere Ali by my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook). Now, of course, we are perfectly aware that under the present circumstances it is necessary that we should draw into closer relations with Afghanistan; in fact, that is the essential result of Russia coming near to her; and what is most important in the assumption by the Russians of Merv is that they will now be in immediate contact with the frontier of Afghanistan on the North-West. That undoubtedly renders it necessary that we should have closer relations with Afghanistan, and that we should continue to exercise that control over the foreign relations of Afghanistan we now exercise; so that, as the noble Viscount pointed out, we should be in a position to prevent quarrels arising between Afghanistan and its neighbours which might give rise to any serious results to ourselves. The noble Earl who brought the subject forward spoke rather slightingly of diplomatic relations. Now, although I do not say you should lay too much stress on diplomatic assurances, I think that some diplomatic understanding was necessary. The noble Earl said that Afghanistan could not be out of the sphere of Russian influence. Of course, Russia must exercise a certain influence in Afghanistan; but what we mean by Afghanistan being out of the sphere of Russian influence is that they are not to exercise any direct diplomatic pressure upon Afghanistan. The main basis of our whole policy in that country, and the basis of the policy of successive Governments, is that Afghanistan is regarded as being outside the sphere of Russian influence, and it is not merely the danger of Russian encroachment, but the obligations we are under as to Afghanistan, which render it necessary that there should be a friendly Afghanistan acting under our influence, and, to a certain extent, in these matters by our directions. Another point to which the noble Earl alluded was what he called the total destruction of his policy with the exception of one part of it—namely, the occupation of Quetta, which, although it was loudly condemned at the time, was afterwards adopted. I remember that there was a very loud condemnation of the occupation of Candahar, and that doubts were expressed as to the occupation of Quetta—doubts expressed by persons of great experience in Indian affairs. But the Government came to the conclusion that, on the whole, weighing the matter on all sides, it was desirable to occupy Quetta, and having so decided they took further steps. They thought it was desirable that one portion at Quetta should be placed on a more stable footing, and negotiations have taken place between the Indian Government and the Khan of Khelat which have resulted in the administration of Quetta and the Bolan Pass being entirely handed over to us. Then the noble Earl referred to the discontinuance of the construction of a railway from Sibi to Quetta. Well, that is a matter which depends upon a variety of considerations; and although the railway to Sibi was completed four years ago, it was not thought expedient at that time that it should be continued to Quetta. The time has, however, now come when the matter must be reconsidered; for, having fixed ourselves at Quetta, it naturally follows that we should give the necessary protection to our garrison there by means of railway communication. Now, my Lords, the noble Viscount who spoke last asked what we intended to do, and that probably is a point the House may feel the most anxiety upon. It is very obvious that, as we are at present in communication with the Russian Government, I am not in a position to say much; but this I think I may say—that we are perfectly sensible that, looking to our communications in Afghanistan and to the approach of Russia to our actual frontier, it will be necessary to have some definite and clear demarcation of what is Afghanistan and what is the Russian line of frontier. That is a point which we are well aware must be settled, and before this occupation of Merv took place Her Majesty's Government had been in communication with the Ameer, with the view of collecting information and preparing for the ultimate dealing with the question. At the same time, as the noble Earl must be aware, it is a subject of very great difficulty. He himself has alluded to the country on the North-West Frontier, and knows how difficult it is to draw a line with perfect satisfaction. I hold that it would be a complete mistake for the Government of this country or the Government of India not to look at the whole of this question together, or to forget that, although the line of approach of Russia from the side of Persia may be an event which more immediately requires our attention, yet that there are other lines of approach, and that, without in the least implying apprehension of an invasion, the approach of the two Powers to one another must necessitate further communication in regard to their position with regard to those regions. My Lords, these are matters which are fully present to our attention; but I gather with satisfaction, from what has been said on both sides of the House, that however we may dislike the advance of Russia towards India, we do not think there is any cause for alarm. It is perfectly competent for us to deal with the matter after our own fashion without consulting the views of any other Power, and in such a way as to make it understood in India that while we do not apprehend any such event as an attack by Russia on India, we are perfectly prepared to take those measures which may be necessary to make our frontier in India one which, I believe, will be as strong and unassailable as any other land frontier in the world.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I must express the disappointment which I feel at much that has fallen from the noble Earl who has just sat down. The noble Earl's speech has left your Lordships just as much in ignorance of the policy of the Government as you were at the beginning. He bestowed most of his attention upon what I may call the ancient history of this matter, and steadily avoided the point upon which the attention of the House is mainly concentrated. The noble Duke opposite, from whom we have heard a very interesting and able speech, disbelieves in any danger, and, to a great extent, justifies Russia in her subjugation of the Turcoman Tribes around Merv. Now, whatever nations do in fulfilment of what they hold to be their inevitable destiny, we are entitled to look to their assurances formally, clearly, and unequivocally given. A great Power like Russia should not give deliberate assurances of that kind, and then, almost before the ink in which they are written is dry, endeavour to find some excuse for casting them to the winds. It would be easy to weary the House by reading the numerous assurances given by Russian Ministers, Statesmen, and Ambassadors, explaining her specific intentions with regard to Merv. There are even Imperial declarations on the subject. In 1875 the noble Earl the present Colonial Secretary warned Count Schouvaloff about the approach of Russia near Merv, and received from him in reply satisfactory assurances. In 1876 Prince Gortchakoff assured Lord Augustus Loftus that the Russians had no intention of moving upon Merv. In 1879 a similar disclaimer was given by the Russian Ambassador in London to my noble Friend near me (the Marquess of Salisbury). In that same year the Emperor of Russia, in a personal interview with Lord Dufferin at St. Petersburg, gave him an assurance that the English were unreasonably alarmed, and that no movement upon Merv was intended. These were as distinct and emphatic assurances as one honourable man can give to another. But they were not all. In 1879 Lord Dufferin, receiving from the Russian Minister at St. Petersburg what amounted to a qualification of the assurances that had been given, protested, and satisfying assurances were thereupon again given. In 1881 a letter was shown by the Russian Ambassador to the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs containing an intimation that possibly some temporary occupation of Merv might be desirable. The noble Earl protested against the suggestion as an English Minister was bound to do, and in March of that year further assurances were given that nothing whatever was intended. Thus, year after year you have had successive remonstrances and protests on the part of the English Government as to the intentions of the Russian Government, and year after year you have had the most distinct assurances that your wishes would be respected. But what has happened since 1881? From time to time various Members of both Houses of Parliament have questioned the Government on the subject of the Russian advance towards Merv. I could read a whole string of Questions which prove this at all events—that great anxiety has been felt, and that there has been a prevalent desire to know the true state of things. In March, 1881, Sir Charles W. Dilke, on being asked whether he would telegraph to Herat to ascertain the truth of the rumour that Russian troops were at Merv, replied that the investigation of the rumour was not worth the expense of a telegram. That answer, I think, shows that the Government were extremely apathetic and indifferent. Later on the same Question was again put to Sir Charles W. Dilke. He replied—"The Government have no reason to suppose that the Russian troops are now at Merv;" and on being asked whether he would telegraph for information, he said—"No." Thus we obtained no information from the Government, although we now know that all this time movements in the direction of Merv were going on. Now, what really is the value or importance of Merv? The Russian Government have somewhere been good enough to say that they have changed their opinion about the importance of that place, and that it is of less value than they supposed it to be. But in this House there is a general acknowledgment of its importance. My noble Friend who began this discussion referred to the ancient importance of Merv. It was once a town great in Oriental learning, in wealth, civilization, and population. We read in some old historians that the population was stated to be as high as 1,000,000. This, at least, is certain—that Merv was a rich, cultivated, and populous city. And the old conditions which made Merv rich and populous exist at present. These conditions are two—a fertile soil and an abundance of water. My noble Friend the noble Duke spoke of it as a mere oasis surrounded with deserts, and consequently valuable only in itself, and furnishing no base of operations in a military point of view. I would not set my judgment against that of my noble Friend; but my impression, derived from recent travels and inquiries, is that there is an oasis on three sides, and that on the South-Western side is a very fertile grass tract, where military operations can be carried on. Though the noble Duke put down the population at the modest estimate of 10,000, I believe that everyone who really knows the country would put the numbers at much more. We know that the population are capable of rendering effective service as irregular horse, and when brought under discipline may render all the services which a military Power may require of them. These tribes have been driven back upon Afghanistan, and the occupation of Merv by Russia distinctly threatens Herat as well as the independence of Persia. If that be a truer estimate of the value of Merv, what are the consequences which may be expected from its annexation? For we must bear in mind that while, on one occasion, the Russian Government threatened a temporary occupation, not one word has been spoken now which implies that the occupation is other than permanent. The Rulers of India in former times held that Merv was the key of Herat, and that Herat was the key of India. The most serious point of all is that, by the annexation of Merv, Russia and England are distinctly brought into political contact. They are the only two great Powers in that part of the world. Once you cut away the neutral zone, be the course what it may, whether the two Governments be friendly or unfriendly, rivalry in various particulars must grow up. Rivalry there must be between the two nations. In every Eastern town, bazaar, and village, wherever England and Russia are known, there will be all that reckless political competition, so to speak, which grows up from the very necessity of the case. There were parts of the speech of the noble Duke which seemed to favour the theory that it was well that we should become conterminous with a civilized Power. I was glad that the noble Earl who spoke for the Government did not lend his voice to that view. The noble Duke said that Russia was a civilized Power, that she would spread civilization, and that wherever civilization spread it must be for the advantage of the world. I do not believe in the doctrine of the noble Duke. The experience of Europe and of the whole world is adverse to it. Conterminous borders are no guarantee for the friendship of States. Are France and Germany the better friends because their borders are conterminous? Are France and Italy? Are Germany and Russia? And what reason is there to expect that when our borders are conterminous with those of Russia our relations with Russia will be better? The only result, as far as we are concerned, is that the military burdens of India must be increased. One other point. We hoped to have heard some statement of what the policy of Her Majesty's Government must be in circumstances which the noble Earl admitted to be very grave. The noble Duke said that we should not ask any further assurances from Russia. My Lords, what is the use of assurances when they are not worth the paper on which they are written? The noble Earl said that Her Majesty's Government, at all events, are prepared to deal calmly with the question in their usual fashion. What does their usual fashion mean?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I did not say "in our usual fashion." I do not think I spoke of fashion. I may have said that we should deal with it without passion.

The Earl of CARNARVON: I did not so understand the noble Earl. But what is the policy which Her Majesty's Government are prepared to pursue? The noble Earl said that they would draw closer our relations with Afghanistan. Does that mean very much what was the policy of my noble Friends behind me, or does it mean something very different? He said we ought to take up a strong position.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I never said that we meant to take up a strong position.

The Earl of CARNARVON: At all events, that we were so to arrange our relations with Afghanistan that Russia should not consider that Afghanistan came within the range of her influence. The Government, I think, should either take up a strong material position, or so speak to Russia that there might be no mistake whatever as to their meaning. Lord Lawrence, who was satisfied of the dangers of the gradual approaches and perpetual annexations on the part of Russia, held that it was incumbent upon the Government of England to draw a particular line, and that if such line were overpassed a *casus belli* would be established. Whatever policy we now adopt, let it for once be firm and consistent, instead of a policy oscillating to and fro, and which is hot at one time and cold at another. The result of the vacillation that has hitherto been shown by the Government is that they cannot speak out with the plainness and vigour with which they ought to speak. On the other hand, the Russian Government are encouraged by this seeming indifference to make further annexations and to mistake the indifference of a small section of politicians for the indifference of the whole country; and at the last moment we shall awake to find that the dream resolves itself into some most terrible and bloody reality.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK: My Lords, the noble Earl who has just spoken has assumed that there has been vacillation in the policy of the Government in respect to Central Asia. Now, I can recollect a striking instance of vacillation with respect to the policy of this country in regard to Central Asia, and that was when the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) talked one day of "large maps," and then suddenly changed his opinion and policy and pursued a directly opposite line. The policy of Her Majesty's Government, far from being vacillating, has been consistent, clear, and intelligible. Sir Lepel Griffin, who was charged by the Government of India with the conduct of negotiations with Abdurrahman, addressed that Prince in August, 1880, when he was placed on the Throne of Afghanistan, to the following effect:—

> "The British Government admits no right of interference by Foreign Powers within Afghanistan."

Later on, in the other House, on a very important occasion, when the policy of the Government in withdrawing Her Majesty's Forces from Candahar was discussed, the Marquess of Hartington said that—

> "The present Government have admitted as plainly as any other that the integrity and independence of Afghanistan is a matter to them of vital importance, and that they do not intend to permit interference by any Foreign Powers with the internal and external affairs of Afghanistan."

Nothing, I think, could be more clear or more precise than the declarations which Her Majesty's Government have made of their determination to prevent foreign interference with Afghanistan; and on every occasion the Russian Government have admitted that Afghanistan was beyond the sphere of the influence which they consider they have a right to exercise in Central Asia. While I quite agree with the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) that in some respects the subjugation of the Turcomans of Merv to Russia will be of advantage to the civilization, peace, and comfort of that part of the world—because I know they have been the greatest stealers of men in the whole of the vast area of Central Asia, and have supplied the slave markets for the whole country—while I cannot regret that they have come under the Sovereignty of a Power sufficiently strong to prevent the terrible devastation of Persian Khorassan by these Turcomans, I must, at the same time, express my regret, looking at the matter from a political point of view, that the Russian dominion has extended so far as Merv. But my reasons are not quite the same as those of noble Lords opposite. I do not believe in the great strategical value of Merv, and I consider that no geographical limit will prevent Russia from exercising influence in Afghanistan if she should wish to do so. Besides, Bokhara, a country under the control of Russia already, adjoins Afghanistan. I do not, therefore, believe that the extension of the Russian dominion to Merv is to be regretted on the ground that it will give Russia greater power of exercising influence than she had before. But I regret the acceptance of the Sovereignty of Merv by Russia, because it may probably lead to disturbances and dissensions between the Turcomans of Merv, who are now Russian subjects, and the people of Afghanistan, which may cause unpleasant transactions between Russia and Afghanistan. Mainly on that account the possession of Merv by Russia has always been deprecated by the Government of India, and has always been looked upon by the Rulers of Afghanistan with apprehension. I am one of those who think that the negotiations which were carried on for many years between Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff, and other eminent statesmen, and which had for their object the maintenance of a wide margin between the Possessions of England and Russia in the East, were wise. In Europe no evils arise from great Empires being conterminous; but the case is very different in the East, where the subjects of both Powers are not of their own nationality, and where there must be greater difficulty from the nature of things in settling any small differences than there can be in Europe. Moreover, the local agents on the spot are not always under the same control and subject to the same influences as in Europe. I, therefore, regret that the time has now come when, practically, the English and Russian Empires in Asia must be considered as conterminous. I can state shortly how I consider that this has occurred. In 1878 the condition of affairs between this country and Russia was exceedingly critical. The Reserves were called out, our Fleet was sent to the Dardanelles, and troops from India were sent to Cyprus. In the spring of that year we were on the verge of a war with Russia. At that time General Kauffman unwisely despatched a Mission to Cabul. That led to the war between England and Afghanistan; and the result was, undoubtedly, a great diplomatic defeat to the Russian Government. The Russian Mission was obliged to leave Cabul; Shere Ali Khan, to whom it had been sent, was driven ignominiously from his country; and when he appealed to Russia for assistance, the Russians were unable to assist him. It was about that time that the first really serious movement took place along the Northern Frontier of Persia, and General Lomakin advanced in the direction of Merv. We had in Afghanistan our misfortunes, among them being the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and the repulse at Maiwand. The Russians, too, had their misfortunes. General Lomakin was defeated; but afterwards, in 1881, General Skobeleff defeated the Turcomans in a great battle, and, in fact, established Russian authority over the Tekke Turcomans, which carried with it almost inevitably the assumption of Sovereignty at Merv. Russia, in my opinion, has during all these years been impelled forward to acquire an expensive, and, to my mind, very useless territory; we, on the other hand, have spent some £20,000,000 in Afghanistan; and, as far as I am able to judge, the condition of affairs in Afghanistan is certainly no better than it was before. That is my way of accounting for the present condition of affairs; and these mistakes made by England and by Russia are the reasons why the wise provisions contemplated by Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff could not be maintained, and we have at present to accept the inevitable. My noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon) does not seem altogether to have understood the explanation given by the Secretary of State for India respecting the policy of the Government. The general lines of that policy are surely clear enough — namely, that we maintain the resolution which we have expressed in no ambiguous terms, that it is our business to see that there is no foreign interference with Afghanistan; and, moreover, that, under the present circumstances, it is necessary that there should be some more clear demarcation of the frontier between Russian territory at Merv and Afghanistan than now exists, with the view of preventing the difficulties which are not unlikely to arise from the Russian Turcomans and the Turcomans under the rule of the Ameer of Afghanistan being conterminous. It would not be reasonable to ask the Government, so short a time after the news arrived, and before they have been able to communicate with the Viceroy of India, to enter into further explanations regarding the manner in which the relations between England and Afghanistan may be strengthened and made more intimate. But the noble Earl (the Earl of Lytton), who succeeded me in the Office of Governor General of India, has asked me whether a recommendation, which the Government of India made in 1875, expresses the policy which Her Majesty's Government now maintain in this respect, and he read a paragraph from the despatch in which that recommendation was expressed. Perhaps your Lordships will allow me to read it again. It is as follows:—

> "Much discussion has recently taken place as to the effect that would be produced by a Russian advance to Merv. We have before stated to Her Majesty's Government our apprehension that the assumption by Russia of authority over the whole Turcoman country would create alarm in Afghanistan; and we think it desirable to express our opinion of the course which should be adopted if it should take place. It would then become necessary to give additional and more specific assurances to the Ruler of Afghanistan that we are prepared to assist him to defend Afghanistan against attack from without. It would probably be desirable to enter into a Treaty engagement with him; and the establishment of a British Resident at Herat would be the natural consequence of such an engagement and of the nearer approach of the Russian Frontier."—[Afghanistan, 1878, pp. 134-5.]

That opinion was given nine years ago, and it was given before the events took place which are well known to your Lordships, when the noble Earl opposite succeeded me as Viceroy; and if I am asked whether the recommendations we then made can be carried out now, I must know somewhat more than I now do about the present position of Afghanistan. It is a question that can only be answered by the Viceroy, after obtaining the best information that he can obtain of the disposition of the Ameer of Cabul. The warning which the Government of India gave to the noble Marquess opposite, when he was Secretary of State for India, contained in the very despatch from which the noble Earl has quoted, against a course which was calculated to alienate the Ameer Shere Ali, and in all probability to bring on a war between England and Afghanistan, was not taken. No attention was paid to it by the noble Marquess, or the noble Earl, and the warning came true. By their policy they brought on the war. They nearly dissolved Afghanistan into its first elements again; and the noble Earl asks me whether I would now carry out a recommendation which was given in circumstances entirely different from those existing at present, and when he and the noble Marquess who sits by his side have, by their action, prevented the circumstances from remaining the same. I agree with the opinion expressed by the noble Duke behind me as to the establishment of British Agents in Afghanistan. I have no objection to the location of British Agents at Herat, or in other parts of Afghanistan, upon one condition — that is, that they shall go with the full concurrence of the Ruler of the country, and go as friends, and not be looked upon as enemies and spies. That was the advice which we gave to the noble Marquess, but which he did not act upon. I do not agree with the noble Earl (the Earl of Lytton) that a British Agent would run any serious risk at Herat. There have been British Agents in Herat before; they have remained there for some time, and they came to no harm. I consider that if a British Agent even now were placed at Herat with the full consent and at the wish of the Ruler of Afghanistan, he would not be in a position of greater risk than Englishmen often occupy in different parts of the world. It would be a great advantage to have an English Resident at Herat, because he would be on the spot when any differences arose between the Turcoman tribes of Afghanistan and of Merv, and, therefore, would be able to settle them. My Lords, I regretted to hear the noble Earl disagree with the general opinion entertained of the value of a strong Afghanistan between Russia and India. I understood the noble Earl to take the view that it was no use our making any representations to Russia in respect of her progress towards Merv; that the idea of having a strong and independent Afghanistan was altogether a fallacy; and that we ought to take up a military and political position which would enable us to look with perfect equanimity at the advance of Russia.

THE EARL OF LYTTON: Afghanistan never can be, and never has been, independent.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: It comes to very nearly the same thing—namely, that Afghanistan cannot be united and independent. I do not think the opinion of the noble Earl is borne out by the history of Afghanistan. At the present time the Ruler of Afghanistan appears to me, as far as I can judge, to have governed his country with energy and ability, and to have made quite as much progress as could have been expected in the time in establishing his authority over the whole country. The noble Earl doubts whether he can establish his authority over the country. I think Abdurrahman is in no worse position than his Predecessor, Shere Ali, who established his authority over the whole of Afghanistan, including Herat and the outlying parts. For many years his father, Dost Mahomed, did the same thing; and, therefore, I say that history is opposed to the contention of the noble Earl. The noble Earl said that the position he wished to take up had been taken up before he left India—I mean the position which would enable us to look with perfect equanimity at the advance of Russia, and he complained that his policy had been reversed by the present Government and my noble Friend (Lord Ripon) who succeeded him as Viceroy. I was perfectly astonished to hear that statement, and I waited to see what proof the noble Earl had to bring forward. I waited, moreover, to see in what point my noble Friend and the present Government had altered the policy which he carried out while he was Governor General. What was the position in which the noble Earl left Afghanistan? The position of Afghanistan was this. The policy of the Conservative Government was—

> "To hand over Herat to Persia, to separate Western and Southern Afghanistan—that is to say, Herat and Candahar—from Northern and Eastern Afghanistan, composed of Turkistan and Cabul-cum-Jellalabad."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What is the noble Earl reading from?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I will satisfy the noble Marquess in a moment if he will only have a little patience.

> "They proposed to make Northern and Eastern Afghanistan over to any strong Ruler who might be found. Candahar had been already erected into a separate State, granted as a hereditary possession of Wali Shere Ali Khan, while Herat was destined for Persia. The Persian negotiations fell through, and the idea was naturally not revived when the Liberals took Office."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What is the quotation from?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I will satisfy the noble Marquess in a moment. The noble Earl in his speech threw out, as I understood it, some accusation against Lord Ripon or the Government that some breach of faith had been committed by the evacuation of Candahar. What were the real circumstances of the case? While the Conservative Government were in power a declaration was made at Cabul—

> "That the British Government had no intention of occupying permanently or annexing Candahar, and our withdrawal was in direct accordance with the reiterated and solemn professions and assurances of the Government of India to the Chiefs and people of Cabul. We could not have remained without a breach of public faith."

My Lords, the words which I have read to the House were written by a gentleman of the highest reputation in the Indian Civil Service, and who was actually the officer employed by the noble Earl (the Earl of Lytton) to carry out these negotiations with Abdurrahman—Sir Lepel Griffin. There is no man in existence who is so entirely competent to express a clear opinion as to what the position of affairs was in Afghanistan as left by the noble Earl opposite. The words which I have read to the House were written, as I have said, by Sir Lepel Griffin, in a letter addressed to *The Times* on March 15, 1883. Now, I think I have, at any rate, protected my noble Friend (Lord Ripon) from the attack made upon him by the noble Earl. I ask the noble Earl what was this very beautiful condition of affairs which he left in Afghanistan, and which would enable us to look with perfect equanimity at the advance of Russia? I cannot understand what hallucination came over the noble Earl which led him to suppose that he left such a condition of affairs, and that the Government of Lord Ripon had amused themselves by destroying this beautiful fabric and substituting something else in its place. The noble Earl took great credit to himself for the Beloochistan proceedings. I think he might have said something of a most distinguished public servant, Sir Robert Sandeman, to whom I feel the main credit for the success of the Beloochistan policy is due. The noble Earl, so far as I understood him, seemed to think that something entirely new and extraordinary had been done in Beloochistan. It is not at all the case. The noble Earl knows that, as regards Beloochistan, we had a Treaty made years ago, which gave us power to occupy any position there which we considered necessary. The occupation of Quetta, therefore, was authorized by Treaty; and, in point of fact, the Beloochistan policy was, to a considerable extent, initiated before the noble Earl went to India. Until after the recent war, I myself was against the occupation of Quetta as a military station, because it is so far from the Indus. But circumstances after the last Afghan War greatly changed. It would have been difficult for us to have withdrawn from Quetta, in consequence of the arrangements we had made with the Afghan tribes in its neighbourhood. I, therefore, have come to the conclusion, with many others, that, whatever objections there may have previously been, it is desirable to maintain a force at Quetta, rather than to alter the arrangements made with the neighbouring tribes. I wish to say that, for my part, I consider the idea of a Russian invasion of India to be a mere bugbear. I agree with the view expressed by one of the most distinguished of our Governor Generals of India—Lord Dalhousie—who, after discussing all the possibilities of such an invasion and the great physical difficulties in its way, said—

> "All I can say is that, if the Russians should try to invade India, I wish that I might be Governor General of India at the time."

I think that in discussing this question we are apt to run away with the idea that there is some real danger to be apprehended by Russia's advance to Merv. But that the possession of a few mud hovels in the desert should menace the power of England in India is to me an idea which cannot for a single moment be entertained by anyone with a knowledge of the relative power of the two countries, the distances to be passed, the resources of the Indian Empire, and the loyalty of the Queen's Indian subjects. I think the discussions in this House and in the other House have been satisfactory, because they have shown that, however much we may differ as to the past, we are all agreed that the absence of foreign interference in Afghanistan is a matter of great importance, and that in any policy which Her Majesty's Government may pursue to obviate the inconveniences — I will not call them dangers — of Russia's extension of Sovereignty to Merv, we shall have the support of both sides of the House.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, the noble Earl, in the course of his remarks, expressed his assent to the suggestion of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) that we should not thrash over the controversies that have taken place in this House with respect to past Indian policy; but that good precept which he laid down he certainly did not follow. He gave us very little information as to the future policy of the Government; and very little information as to the immediate past; but it seems to me as if his whole contribution to this debate consisted of all the dirt which he could pick out of past controversies to fling at his opponents. My Lords, in this task his memory has, I fear, somewhat failed him. He revived a number of charges, one of which was that I had expressed my belief in the improbability of a Russian advance to Merv a few days before orders were given for the advance of the British troops to Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, the observations I made in this House, in answer to a noble Lord opposite (Lord De Mauley), expressing my disbelief in Russia's march to Merv, were made in 1877; while the military advance into Afghanistan took place at the end of 1879, in consequence of the presence of the Russian Ambassador at Cabul. And I will observe, in passing, that my scepticism as to the probability of a military advance at that time by Russia to Merv was entirely justified by the subsequent course of events, for it has not been by a military advance that Merv has come under the domination of Russia, but by other means. The noble Earl has also revived the old charge that the war of 1879 was due to the impression produced on Shere Ali's mind by a request made by my noble Friend that he would admit an English Minister to his capital.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I did not say that.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Does the noble Earl say he did not declare that that war in Afghanistan was due to the policy of my noble Friend, which he opposed? There was not a shred of proof for this. The noble Earl must know very well that Shere Ali was alienated before that time from the Government—that he refused to receive a British officer from Yarkund on account of the attitude that had been adopted towards him. He knows that Shere Ali refused the subsidy which the noble Earl offered him. It is a matter of notoriety that the commencement of Shere Ali's alienation was due to the feeble and nerveless policy of the noble Earl in 1873. When, in that year, Shere Ali besought from the noble Earl a distinct declaration on the attitude of the British Government in respect to the advance of the Russian Government he could not obtain any satisfactory assurance. From that day it is well known that the alienation of Shere Ali commenced, and I believe that statement is confirmed by General Roberts, who reported that he himself, when in Cabul, found the general impression among the Afghans was that the alienation which ultimately caused the war in 1879 was produced by the refusal of the noble Earl to give him the required assurances of support in 1873. The noble Earl says that the orders he gave Sir Robert Sandeman to settle some disputes in Beloochistan were the commencement of the occupation of Quetta, to which now, as a sheet-anchor of safety, Her Majesty's Government are clinging. But the noble Earl must be perfectly aware that if it had been proposed to him at the time to occupy Quetta, he would have rejected the idea with the utmost abhorrence. Quetta was occupied two years later by my noble Friend (the Earl of Lytton), and it was then made the matter of vehement protest in this House by Lord Lawrence, supported by the noble Earl. The Government of the noble Earl, when he was in India, never gave the slightest indication of any desire to occupy Quetta; and when it was occupied by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, noble Lords opposite vigorously opposed and condemned it. My Lords, had it not been that I found it necessary to dissipate these charges of the noble Earl, I should not have desired to take any part in this debate, because the subject has been thoroughly and completely dealt with by noble Lords on this side of the House who have preceded me. I will only observe that the information that we have obtained from the Government to-night is of an enigmatical and insufficient character. We are told that the relations must be drawn closer between England and Afghanistan, and that the foreign relations of the Ameer must be placed under the control of the English Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: They are now under its control.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Then there is all the less novelty in the information we have received. But we are not told how these relations are to be controlled—whether the influence is to be moral or physical. And I should like to ask the noble Earl to consider this—that it is not the foreign policy of the Ameer that really furnishes the danger of the future. My noble Friend has pointed out that Russia has been urged on by a force which she cannot resist in this course of annexation which has ended in Merv. I do not imagine that that force which has pushed her thus far forward will necessarily stop there now. It is as true now as when the despatch of 1864 was written that Russia cannot bear dens of robbers on her frontiers. She will still have dens of robbers upon her frontiers at Merv. She will have a tumultuous and disturbing population, subject to no authority, bound by no law, who, if not restrained, will be perpetually committing outrages which will give to Russia a motive, or an appearance of motive, every bit as fair as that on which she has hitherto gone for advancing a step further in order to punish and control them. And I want to know how you are to so arrange your relations with the Ameer of Afghanistan that that danger will cease to exist? There was another point which I thought unsatisfactory in the speech of the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley). He appeared to me, as did the noble Earl who has just sat down, to think exclusively of strategic considerations. I believe that the great fault of our policy with the Afghans and the Turcomans—a fault which, I am bound to say, I do not think is exclusively confined to one side of the House—is that we have been too much led by

European modes of thought and methods of warfare, and have paid too little regard to the peculiar circumstances of the East. In Europe, if the strategic position is sound, everything is safe; but it is not so in the East. There is an impalpable power which we know very little of, and which we are obliged to describe by the unmeaning French word *prestige*—an impalpable influence which stretches like a shadow before the frontier of every Power, and in proportion as that *prestige* is great or small—in proportion as the range of shadow is long or short—it will spread forward its true dominion far beyond the exact space that its arms embrace. Your frontier may be as strong as you please; your fortresses may be as impregnable as you please; but if the *prestige* of the Power coming against you is greater than your own, it will penetrate through that barrier; it will undermine your sway; it will dissolve the loyalty and patriotism of those you rule, where loyalty and patriotism do not mean what they do here, and you will find that your fortresses will dissolve and crumble under you, and that you are overthrown by the desertion of those who readily fly to the Power they believe to be stronger than yourself It is true that Eastern nations fight with arms; but they also fight with the reputation of strength. Russia has gained Merv, not because she has taken it, but because the Turcomans, looking at Russia advancing and England retreating, said —"England is nothing, and we will pay our submission to Russia." Have you not noticed as a strange circumstance that the capture of Merv has taken place when our fortunes in Egypt are at the lowest, when our credit is being sullied, and our resources are being strained? Do you imagine that there are no other populations similar to those of Merv, and that the same reasoning will not arise in other Asiatic places? If you look merely to strategy, and neglect what is popularly described as *prestige*, the tale which was told of Merv will in due time be related of Herat. I dare say there will be no military expedition —it, perhaps, will not be necessary for Russia to beleaguer the walls of Herat or to open her entrenchments; but if the impression spreads in Western Afghanistan that we are the retreating and Russia the advancing Power, and if they gather from our recent action the melancholy inference that England, under her present mode of Government cannot be counted upon for any vigorous or tenacious resistance, they will not wait to be besieged or attacked—they will simply carry their submission as the Turcomans have done to the White Czar, in whose prowess they believe. That is the great danger I see in our policy to India. We are simply looking at the strategic considerations, and imagine that if they are cared for all will be safe. But if it should so happen that any Viceroy should occupy the position which Lord Dalhousie was said to desire—of being the Viceroy of India when the Russian invasion takes place—what he would have to contend with would not be a direct attack of the Russian Army coming through the Khyber and Bolan Passes. It would be the undermining of his strength in India by the production of intrigues and rebellions among the Natives of India, the gradual weakening of the respect for the English arms, disaffection towards the English Raj, and the gradual crumbling away of our resources before Russia has struck a blow against our frontier. That is the real danger we have to fear; that is why it is a matter of life and death to us that Afghanistan should be kept clear not only of Russian soldiers, but of Russian influence and intrigue. That is why this acquisition of Merv must not be put aside by platitudes about the advantage of having a humane instead of an inhuman Power upon the borders of Afghanistan, or with the consolation that Merv is not on the route to anywhere particular. The event must be looked on in a graver light than that. It is the gravest that has happened with respect to our Empire in the East, and I feel sure that the English people will exact a heavy responsibility from Her Majesty's Government unless they approach the question with a due sense of the terrible magnitude of the interests surrounding it.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I can quite understand that the noble Marquess has been, much nettled, as he seems to have been at the remarks of the noble Earl on the subject of the past war in Afghanistan. He must feel regret, when he calmly reflects upon what passed at that time, upon the millions that have been spent and the anarchy which has been produced in Afghanistan, and above all on the lesson taught to Russia, which I do not believe dreamed of such a Quixotic enterprize as trying to take India from us, but was convinced by the impulsive action of the noble Marquess that whenever Russia has a quarrel with us she can stir up that sort of irritation, and create that sort of panic, to which the noble Marquess yielded when he went into that most unjust and unnecessary war. I quite admit that the noble Earl the ex-Viceroy, in introducing this question, laid down a very charming scheme in the debate to-night. He said we had better avoid the past and confine ourselves to the present and future. Nothing, I think, could be more sensible or admirable; but hardly a minute had elapsed before the noble Earl proceeded to make a very natural attempt to define his own policy, and began to attack the policy of his Predecessor and Successor. The noble Viscount spoke shortly, without one word in support of the views of the noble Earl. The noble Marquess has made strong invectives against us; but he has entirely declined to reply to that pointed question which the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) had put to him, and which was to describe what was the strong military and political position which the noble Earl left behind him in Afghanistan at the end of his Viceroyalty. On the other hand, the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) differed entirely from the late Viceroy, and said he knew what those assurances of Russia were; that they were worth nothing; and that he did not blame Russia for making them. He was indignant with me because I did not listen to the very long list of extracts from the Blue Book which he read, with which I happen to be already acquainted. I entirely agree with my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India that it is perfectly impossible to adopt a particular course with regard to another country if you are not to have diplomatic relations; but I quite admit the general tenour of the extracts which the noble Earl read—or rather repeated—to the House. They certainly give the notion that there was no intention on the part of Russia of taking Merv. I admit, however, that there are always in them reservations, and that the Russian Government and the Russian Emperor did not give up their liberty of action for all times and under all circumstances. I am bound to say that I do not think that I was the dupe of any representation about Merv; but I never assured the House and the public that it was perfectly impossible that Russia would advance. My Lords, I certainly think it is a reason of complaint that when two countries are in friendly communication with each other on one subject, and the assurance of one is always more or less in one direction, although unexpected circumstances may arise—though I cannot imagine that any such unexpected circumstances have arisen with regard to the Merv Chiefs—that we should suddenly find that the annexation of Merv is a *fait accompli*, without any previous communication to ourselves. The noble Earl the ex-Viceroy promised, in the beginning of his speech, that he would tell us what we ought to do. While the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) dreaded proximity, the late Viceroy took the contrary line, and argued that as Russia advances we should advance as rapidly as we can. The noble Earl's argument was, in fact, that the two countries should be in close proximity. The noble Marquess takes a higher line. His views are Oriental, in contradistinction, as he says, to our Western ideas; he says the business of a country like this is not to be concerned about strategy, but about the fanciful impressions you may produce. My Lords, I believe for the defence of India that strategy wisely considered and calmly acted upon is more valuable than attempts to influence in any false way the imagination of an Oriental people. My Lords, my noble Friend so fully stated the general principles upon which we proposed to act that I cannot add anything to what he has said. He wisely abstained from stating the exact mode in which we should try to strengthen our relations with Afghanistan; but, on the other hand, he pointed out that some clear and distinct definition of the frontier between Russia and Persia on the side of Afghanistan was of the greatest importance to the carrying out of the general principles on which we propose to act. The noble Earl opposite twitted us, saying that for three weeks we had been unable to determine what we should say to Russia. The noble Earl is, however, wrong, because it so happens that I have been in communication with the Russian Ambassador here, and I have sent despatches to St. Petersburg. But I cannot help feeling very strongly that if the noble Marquess and the noble Earl had sometimes taken three weeks to consider a new policy before adopting it, if they had sometimes resisted the first impulse of the moment, this country would have been saved great and unnecessary evils. Papers on the subject to which the noble Earl has drawn attention will be presented as soon as possible. They will not include the Correspondence now going on with Russia; but they will include all the documents up to a very recent date.

Lord NAPIER of MAGDALA: My Lords, I should consider it criminal on my part if I were to remain a silent witness on this occasion, because I was thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances connected with the negotiations with the Ameer Shere Ali previous to Lord Lytton's arrival in India, and I consider that he was fully justified in making war on Shere Ali. The Ameer was alienated by our refusal to accord to him the Treaty which he desired. I do not say that we ought to have made the Treaty, or that anything we could have given him would have satisfied him finally; but I maintain that his refusal to admit our officers into his country, and his reception of a Russian Agent at Cabul, his secret correspondence with the Russians at Turkistan, and his concealed military preparations on so extensive a scale as was discovered, showed that Shere Ali had become an enemy, and that the noble Earl the late Viceroy of India was thoroughly justified in making war on him. The occupation of Quetta was looked upon by many Members of this House with great alarm at the time; but the subsequent information fully justifies it. During the Siege of Lucknow, a part of our troops occupied a garden surrounded with a high wall; it was, however, so commanded by musketry from the houses around, that no one could ascertain what the enemy were doing outside until they blew in a part of the wall, which we had immediately to barricade. We then mined under the foundations of the wall, and emerged during the night on the outside, where we made an outwork as a post of observation, which was our Quetta, and enabled us to see what the enemy were doing. Had Her Majesty's Government retained Candahar and given the Ameer Abdurrahman the same subsidy that they give him now, we should have satisfied him, and have been in a better position to support him than we are at present, and should have secured a valuable and loyal Province. Now that we are told that Russia is conterminous with Afghanistan, and as we are bound to support the Ameer of Afghanistan against external aggression, we ought to define clearly the limits of that country, and to determine at what exact point it would be our duty to assist the Ameer against an external enemy. I sincerely trust that the Government will complete our railway system along the Indus, which is necessary for the defence of India.

The Earl of LYTTON said, that as the Government had promised to distribute the Papers, he was willing to withdraw his Motion.

Earl GRANVILLE: The Motion, as far as concerns some part of the Papers, is agreed to.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

HABITUAL CRIMINALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Habitual Criminals Act, 1869—Was *presented* by The Earl of Milltown; read 1ª. (No. 28.)

House adjourned at Nine o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 10*th March,* 1884.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Public Accounts, Mr. Arthur O'Connor *added.*

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Army (Supplementary); Navy (Supplementary).

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Working Men's Clubs Registration * [132]; Redistribution of Seats * [131]; University of Cambridge (Borrowing Powers) * [133].

First Reading—Law of Evidence Amendment * [130].

Second Reading—National Debt * [128].

Committee — Bankruptcy Appeals (County Courts) [118]—r.p.

Committee — Report — Valuation (Metropolis) Amendment [108].

Third Reading—Marriages Legalisation (Stopsley, Beds.) * [125], and *passed,*

QUESTIONS.

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POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—FEMALE CLERKS IN GENERAL POST OFFICE, DUBLIN.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Postmaster General, Why the Female clerks in the Telegraph Department at Dublin, receiving thirty shillings a week and upwards, were refused the annual holiday of three weeks enjoyed by Female clerks receiving a similar rate of salary in London; whether such "an anomaly," to use his words of the 26th of April of last year, will be remedied; and, if he could state why the petitions addressed by the Dublin clerks to that Department on May 1st 1883; October 16th 1883; and November 18th 1883, obtained no answer?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that the subject referred to had been a long time under consideration. He was glad to be able to state that a decision had now been arrived at, and the female clerks in the Dublin Telegraph Department receiving 30*s.* a-week and upwards would be placed in the same position as female clerks receiving a similar rate of salary in London.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—POLICE PROTECTION.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a bailiff named Whiteside, in Glan, county Cavan, under police protection, is allowed money for two horses and cars his own property; if so, how much, and whether paid for by Government or charged to barony of Tullyhaw; is there any other similar case of allowance for vehicles the property of a protected party; what amount of extra pay is given monthly to the constabulary at the post; is it charged to the barony; and, is it true that half the fuel and light allowance is given to the bailiff; and, if so, on what conditions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the bailiff mentioned, Whiteside, is under police protection. Whenever he leaves home, otherwise than on foot, it is necessary for the police to follow him on a separate vehicle; and for this purpose the most convenient and economical arrangement is to employ his own second horse and car, there being no other vehicle within miles which could be hired. The payment for the use of the vehicle is made by the Government. The case is exceptional, but not altogether without precedent. The Constabulary employed on this duty receive no extra pay, except the usual allowance when absent from their station at night. This averages about 14*s.* a-month for each man, and is not charged to the barony. It is not true that half the fuel and light allowance is given to the bailiff. It is paid to the men, who provide themselves.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DEATH OF FRANCIS M'GLONE, DUNGANNON.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the death of Francis M'Glone, on the 22nd February, from injuries received on the 16th February, near Dungannon, when he was attacked by a crowd of Orangemen near the Catholic Church; if he will state what was the political and religious composition of the coroner's jury; if instructions will be given to the police, where party murders occur in Ulster, to avoid summoning at inquests jurymen who might be alleged to be partisans; what steps the police have taken to bring M'Glone's murderers to justice; whether any persons have been made amenable; whether a reward for the conviction of the guilty parties has been or will be offered; whether extra police will be drafted into the locality; whether an inquisition into the murder under the Crimes Act will be held; if not, would he state on what grounds; and, whether M'Glone's dying depositions were taken, or any inquiry held, by the magistrates?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am not aware upon what grounds the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) states in so positive a manner that Francis M'Glone was "attacked by a crowd of Orangemen and murdered." If he is in possession of any information in support of the assertion, I trust he will not fail to communicate it to the proper authorities. The police have been, and still are, actively engaged in endeavouring to clear up the mystery which attaches to the case, but as yet without success. The Coroner's Jury was composed equally of Roman Catholics and

Protestants, none of them known as partizans; and of the two medical men who were examined, and who agreed in their evidence, one was a Roman Catholic, and the other a Protestant. The jury's verdict was an open one—that death resulted from inflammation of the brain, brought on by a contused wound, which might have been caused either by a blow or a fall. In the course of the inquiries made in connection with this case three persons have been arrested. Two have been discharged, and a third is now in custody under remand. The police do not think the case is at present ripe for the offer of a reward, or an inquiry under the Prevention of Crime Act. There is no reason to suppose that extra police are required in the district. M'Glone's informations were taken, and the case has been inquired into by the Resident and local magistrates.

INLAND REVENUE — EXCISE COLLECTIONS.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there are at present sixty-five Excise collections in England, thirteen in Ireland, and thirteen in Scotland; whether it is true, as stated in *The Civilian* of 16th February, that Bandon and Kilkenny collections are to be broken up, thus reducing the number in Ireland from thirteen to eleven; whether a small increase has been recently made to the salaries of a class of Excise officers known as "Division" officers; whether the Treasury sanctioned this on condition that the Board of Excise effected such a saving in their department as would meet this increased expenditure; whether the breaking up of these Irish collections is for the purpose of saving, to meet this increase to the salaries of officers, the great majority of whom are employed in England; and, whether any similar reduction is proposed for Scotland?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the numbers of Excise collections in the Three Kingdoms are correctly stated in the Question to be 65 in England, and 13 each in Scotland and Ireland. It has been found possible recently to reduce the numbers in Ireland by one—not two, as stated—and it is hoped shortly to reduce one in England; but the Board do not see their way to any reduction in Scotland at present. These reductions are made upon consideration of the Excise business of a district, and not for the purpose of meeting increases of expenditure in salaries. The recent improvement in the position of the divisional officers was not made conditional upon reductions in the collections.

MR. HEALY said, that, on the Estimates, he would call attention to the treatment of Ireland in the matter.

ARMY — EXAMINATIONS FOR PROMOTION—FAILURES OF OFFICERS.

EARL PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, How many Captains in the last examination for promotion in the Army failed to pass; whether of the five Captains of the Northumberland Fusiliers who failed to satisfy the examiners four are Adjutants of Militia and Volunteer battalions, and whether he will state how their regimental duties are to be performed during the summer months while they are preparing for the next examination; whether, although the general standard of the examination may not have been lately altered, it is not a fact that the marks have been given more sparingly, and the minimum number necessary to receive a pass has been raised; and, whether failure does not in some cases render officers of long service who have distinguished themselves in time of war liable to be superseded by juniors who have never been out of the United Kingdom?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, as I have already stated, 85 officers failed out of 227 who were examined. Of the five captains referred to in the Question, who failed in the Northumberland Fusiliers, one was adjutant in a Line battalion, one in a Militia battalion, and two in Volunteer battalions. If an officer who is an adjutant finds that preparation for an examination interferes with his duty as adjutant, there is no alternative for him but to resign his adjutancy. It is not a fact that marks have been given more sparingly, nor has the minimum necessary for obtaining a pass been raised since the year 1880. The examiners have invariably received the same instructions. Failure to pass may, of course, render an officer of long and distinguished service liable to supersession by a junior officer without foreign service.

Earl PERCY said, that he would call attention to the matter on the Army Estimates.

POST OFFICE—SORTING CLERKS AND TELEGRAPHISTS.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Postmaster General, Whether, under the arrangement come to at the general revision of the rates of pay of telegraphists and sorters on 1st April 1881, all sorters and telegraphists were to receive extra pay for any duty done on Sundays in excess of two hours; whether all telegraphists and sorters employed in office duty have in fact received such extra pay since 1st April 1881; whether the men employed as sorters on the London and Holyhead Travelling Post Office are in receipt of extra pay for all duty performed on Sundays; why the men engaged as sorters in the Travelling Post Office in Ireland do not receive extra pay for excess duty on Sundays; and, whether he will give an order that they shall in future receive such extra pay, together with the arrears receivable since the date of the revision?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that since the 1st of April, 1881, sorting clerks and telegraphists have been granted extra pay for all extra duty in excess of two hours done on Sunday. A concession of much the same kind has been made to the sorters employed in the London and Holyhead Travelling Post Office since the 1st of October last. It is not intended that the mail sorters on the Irish railways should be in a worse position with regard to Sunday duty than those employed in England, and arrangements are being made to place them, as far as possible, on an equality.

INDIA (TRADE, &c.)—EXPORT OF INDIAN WHEAT.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any Reports have been received as to the bearing the large export of wheat has had on the food of the people; whether this export has stimulated the extension of cultivation, or the substitution of wheat for the other grains previously cultivated; and, whether the information and reports on the subject can be made accessible to individuals interested in the important questions involved in the wheat exports?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Sir, in reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I am sorry to say that I cannot give him any very definite information as to the effect of the large wheat export on the food of the population of India. But, from a careful examination of the price of food grains in the Punjaub and the Central Provinces during the last few years, I find that the large exports are coincident with, and doubtless stimulated by, the low prices of wheat and other food grains consequent on the abundant harvests of the last three years. The wheat export of the two years 1879 and 1880 was only 3,200,000 cwt. The price of Jowar and Bajra—the grain mostly used for food—was about 15 seers, or 30lb., to the rupee. In the two years 1882 and 1883, with exports of nearly 34,000,000 cwt., the price of Jowar and Bajra was about 22 seers, or 44lb., to the rupee. The wheat production of the North-Western Provinces and Oude, the Punjaub, and the Central Provinces is estimated at 23,000,000 quarters. The difference between a good and bad crop will be at least 5,000,000 quarters, or a quantity equal to the greatest export yet reached. Much valuable information respecting the wheat trade is contained in *The Trade Statement of British India*, this year's number of which is now ready for distribution, to which I must refer my hon. and gallant Friend.

NAVY—ADMIRALTY DEPARTMENTS—HIGHER DIVISION CLERKS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is in contemplation to abolish or modify the remainder or any portion of the Upper Division Class at the Admiralty?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, I am somewhat at a loss to understand the meaning of the hon. Member's Question; but I may say that there is no intention to reduce the total number of higher division clerks in the Admiralty Departments.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—MAXIMUM DEPOSIT.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the intention of the Government to raise the maximum sum which a depositor may deposit in one year in the Post Office Savings Bank; and, if so, from what date?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that in 1880 a Bill was introduced by his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, which, among other provisions, would have raised the limit of the amount which could be deposited in a savings bank in a single year above the present maximum of £30. The Bill, he regretted to say, had to be withdrawn in consequence of want of time and of the opposition it provoked. If the circumstances became more favourable to the passing of such a measure, the Government would, he thought, be very glad to reintroduce it.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD said, that, in consequence of the answer of the Postmaster General, he would, on going into Committee of Supply, call the attention of the House to the increasing development of centralization in monetary affairs by the development of the Post Office Savings Bank — centralization which tended to contract the facilities hitherto extended to mercantile operations by banking and other institutions, and likewise placed the State, unguarded, at the mercy of a currency panic.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—EXTENSION TO THE ISLAND OF BARRA.

MR. D. CAMERON asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is proposed to extend telegraphic communication to the Island of Barra; and, if so, whether he will make an effort to lay down the submarine cable without delay, and before the commencement of the fishing season, so as to give the fishcurers and inhabitants dependent on that industry the same facilities for prosecuting their calling as are enjoyed by almost all other fishing communities in the United Kingdom?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, there has been some correspondence between the Post Office and the Fishery Board for Scotland with reference to an extension of the telegraphs to Barra and other remote places in Scotland. As the extensions referred to by the hon. Member would not be remunerative, the regulations now in force do not admit of their being carried out unless the parties interested are prepared to give a guarantee to secure the Department against loss. The terms of the guarantees have been stated, but they have not been accepted; and I am unable to say, therefore, what prospect there is of the extension being carried out.

ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT—PAYMASTERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there has been for some time past a dearth of candidates for posts in the Pay Department; whether there were recently as many as forty regiments or regimental districts without the proper financial Officers; whether any representations have been made to the War Office authorities by the Officers of the Pay Department, asking to be placed upon a footing in respect of rank, pay, and retirement with Officers of the Commissariat; and, whether he proposes to accede to the request?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: Sir, there were recently 22 regiments and one regimental district in which the pay duties were administered by a committee or acting paymaster. The number of candidates for the Pay Department has fallen off considerably since the re-organization of the Army in 1881 diminished the probability of captains having to retire compulsorily; but this incentive to accept paymasterships is likely to revive during the next few years. Representations have recently been made asking that officers of the Pay Department might be placed on the same footing as officers of the Commissariat and Transport Staff. My noble Friend the Secretary of State has under consideration some suggestions in connection with the retirement of officers in this Department; but he can hold out no hope that they will be placed on the same footing as the Commissariat in respect of rank, pay, and retirement.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in the Cork newspapers of February 16th, complaining that the Catholic population of the city and county of Cork was not receiving its fair proportion of the benefits of the Industrial Schools Act; whether it is the case that the Protestant industrial school boys charged to the rates of Cork city are to the Catholic boys similarly circumstanced nearly as one to two; whether, in the county of Cork, the numbers of both are nearly equal; whether, in each of these cases, the number of Catholic boys is not entirely under its due proportion, considering the numerical strength of the Catholic community; whether this is due to the fact that the industrial school accommodation for the Catholic boys of the district is unduly restricted by the Treasury; whether the Catholic male industrial school at Greenmount, Cork, could accommodate over fifty boys in addition to those at present certified for; whether Sir John Lentaigne has endeavoured to induce managers of this and other Catholic industrial schools similarly circumstanced as regards accommodation to give him written admissions that their schools could only accommodate the number of children for which they were certified; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will consider it his duty to recommend an extension of the certificate of the male industrial school at Greenmount, Cork, so as to permit that institution to receive sixty additional children?

Colonel COLTHURST said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a further Question, of which he had given him private Notice — namely, Whether the recommendations of the Royal Commission, if carried into effect, would not remedy the inequalities spoken of by the hon. Member (Mr. Deasy), if such inequalities exist?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy), in my opinion, is under a misapprehension in thinking that industrial schools are merely local institutions restricted to the admission of children from the district in which the school is situated, they being open for the admission of children from all parts of Ireland. In the County Cork there are five Roman Catholic schools with 418 inmates, and two Protestant schools with 107 inmates. In the City of Cork there are two Protestant schools with 145 inmates, and two Roman Catholic schools with 293 inmates. I have not been informed whether all the children in these schools are from Cork; but I am making inquiry. On the 1st instant there were, in industrial schools in Ireland chargeable to the Treasury Vote, 5,199 Roman Catholics, or one in every 761 of the Roman Catholic population, and 850 Protestants, or one in every 1,365 of the Protestant population, or nearly twice as many Roman Catholics as Protestants in these schools in proportion to the population. As regards the Greenmount School, Sir John Lentaigne reported some years ago that there was accommodation for 32 more children than at present, provided certain improvements were made; and this extension was, at the suggestion of Canon Neville, the principal manager of the Greenmount Schools, given to establish a separate school at Passage West. As regards the action of Sir John Lentaigne, referred to in the last paragraph but one of the Question, the rules limiting the accommodation were drawn up by legal advice, and Sir John Lentaigne was directed by the Irish Government to secure their adoption. This was done in 1874, and we are considering whether the form might not be altered to meet the objections of the hon. Member; but such alteration would have no effect upon the number for which the Treasury grant would be paid. In reply to the hon. and gallant Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst), there is a large number of applications for extensions from all parts of Ireland; but, pending any conclusion which may be come to by the Government upon the Report of the Royal Commission, which is at present under consideration, I cannot give any hope of any extension, nor pledge the Government to legislate on the subject this year; and as the inquiry was not alone for Ireland, but for the United Kingdom, I do not see that the Irish Government can act independently of the English Government.

THE CENSUS—POPULATION OF IRELAND IN 1883.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the population of Ireland, up to middle of 1883, was correctly estimated at 5,015,328; and, what does the Registrar General for Ireland estimate will be the population of Ireland in the middle of the present year?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Registrar General states that the estimate quoted was made in the usual manner, and is believed to be accurate, and that the estimate for the middle of the present year, made upon such data as are at present available, is about 4,953,000.

Mr. CROPPER gave Notice to ask for corresponding figures for England and Scotland on Thursday.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) ACT, 1878 —PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS—POWERS OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. LEAHY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If by "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," Town Commissioners acting under "The Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854," have been deprived of all power to borrow for purposes of public improvement unless they are also urban sanitary authorities; whether, in that event, their borrowing powers are limited to the purposes of the Sanitary Acts; whether these purposes include the providing of a Town Hall or the repair or improvement of a Town Hall already existing; and, if he purposes to take steps to restore to Town Commissioners in Ireland the borrowing powers of which they have been so inadvertently deprived?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): Sir, the effect of the Public Health Act, 1878, has been to deprive Town Commissioners who are not also the urban sanitary authority, of all power to borrow on the security of their rates for purposes of public improvement; where Town Commissioners are the sanitary authority, their borrowing powers are limited to the purposes of the Sanitary Acts, but those purposes include the providing, repair, or improvements of a Town Hall. Where Town Commissioners are not the sanitary authority, and do not, as they may, become such by application to the Local Government Board, the rural sanitary authority, which in such case is the sanitary authority over the town, has power to borrow for most of the purposes for which powers of borrowing were by the repealed section of the Towns Improvement Act, 1854, given to Town Commissioners, but those purposes would not include a Town Hall. It is worthy of consideration whether Town Commissioners, not urban sanitary authorities, should not be restored to their powers of borrowing on rates for the purposes for which the rural sanitary authority cannot borrow, and if the opportunity for legislation arises I shall bring the matter before the Local Government Board and Treasury.

SPAIN—GIBRALTAR—THE "MARIANNE NOTOBOHN."

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that, on the 22nd instant, the *Marianne Notobohn,* an American ship, petroleum laden, which had paid port dues at Gibraltar, and was anchored off that port by order of the port authorities, was boarded by a Spanish Revenue Cutter, which placed an armed guard on board, and took possession of the vessel until an assurance was given that she should be moved nearer the Rock; whether the spot at which the incident occurred is held by the British Government to be within British waters; if so, whether explanations have been demanded of the Spanish Government; and, if he will lay upon the Table Papers regarding the occurrence?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that the Government had telegraphed to the Governor of Gibraltar for information, and he stated in reply that a full report was on its way. If his hon. Friend would repeat his Question in a few days he should be able to answer it.

SCOTLAND—THE SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in ordering that the portion of Treasury Minute of December 1882, referring to the promotion, regardless of seniority, of those officers said to be instrumental in detecting the recent frauds in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, to be read to the entire staff of the office, my Lords meant to reflect upon the integrity of the staff, or what meanings did my Lords seek to convey by such proceedings; whether the Head Keeper of said office made any communication to my Lords which would warrant them in taking that step; whether the officer who informed the head of the department, or his depute, about the frauds did so anonymously, and acting not upon anything discovered in the discharge of his duties; and, whether the Treasury Minute in question was based on the Report made by Mr. Monat and the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer for Scotland of their investigation into the frauds?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, the Treasury had no intention of reflecting upon the integrity of the Sasine clerks by its Minute of December, 1882. Their purpose was simply to notify the high value they attached to the zeal of the two officers who had been instrumental in detecting the recent frauds in that Office. The officers who gave the information did not do so anonymously. The Minute was written after the receipt of the Report of Mr. Mowatt and the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—APPEALS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AGAINST SURCHARGES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the Resolution of the Boards of Guardians of Nenagh, Mountmellick, and other Unions in Ireland, protesting against the absence of any right or power of appeal from the surcharges of Local Government Board Auditors as enforced by the Local Government Board; and, whether he will consider the practicability of amending the Law in this respect?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am aware several resolutions have been adopted by Boards of Guardians on this subject. The Local Government Board are not of opinion that any action on the part of their Auditors has rendered such a change in the law necessary; but they are quite willing that the right of appeal shall be given.

PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877 — CONVEYANCE OF PRISONERS ON COMMITTAL.

Mr. EUGENE COLLINS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in England counties are relieved from the expense of conveying prisoners from the time the magistrate signs the warrant of committal to prison, either on remand for trial or on summary conviction, whereas in Ireland counties are only relieved from these expenses from the time a prisoner has been actually received into prison, when he has been brought there on a warrant committing him for trial or on summary conviction; whether Irish counties have been deprived of the relief accorded to English counties only by a trifling technical difference in the wording of the sections of the two Prisons Acts of 1877, referring to both countries severally; whether Irish counties are liable to annual charges amounting in the aggregate to about fifteen thousand pounds for expenses in the conveyance of prisoners, from which English counties have been relieved; and, whether he can facilitate any measure of legislation for the purpose of assimilating the Law in Ireland on the matter of the expenses of conveying prisoners with that in England?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): Sir, my right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) has requested me to answer this Question. The answer to the first part of the Question of the hon. Member is in the affirmative. There is a difference in the wording of the sections of the English and Irish Prisons Acts; and that difference was held sufficient in England, by the Court of Appeal reversing the Court below, to throw upon the Public Exchequer all expenses in respect of conveyance of prisoners incurred subsequent to the making of the order of committal. The annual charges to which Irish counties are liable, and from which English counties have been relieved, are considerably over-stated in the Question. The charge for the year 1883-4 is about £11,250; but this includes a very considerable sum not affected by the subject to which the Question refers. I think it would be very desirable that the law in England and Ireland should be assimilated on one basis or the other.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE WICKLOW MAGISTRACY.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has read a communication from the Town Commissioners of Wicklow, recommending the appointment of Mr. Joseph Smyth, Chairman of the Commissioners, as a Justice of the Peace; and, whether steps will be taken with that object?

MR. M'COAN said, he should like to know whether the communication referred to in the hon. Member's Question did not call upon the Government to dismiss the whole of the magistrates of Wicklow, 83 in number, because they expressed disapproval of the conduct of the Executive with regard to Lord Rossmore?

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes, Sir; the communication did contain that request. The Town Commissioners forwarded a resolution in favour of the appointment of their Chairman to the Commission of the Peace, and they have been informed in reply that his name should, in the first instance, be brought under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant of the county.

INDIA—MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF INTOXICATING DRINKS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the terms of certain official notices offering for public auction the right of manufacturing and selling intoxicating drinks among the people of India, especially to that relating to the district of Malabar:—

> "Notice is hereby given, that the exclusive privilege of manufacturing and vending arrack and toddy (fermented palm juice) in the several parts of the Malabar district for one year from 1st April 1884 to 31st March 1885, will be sold by public auction before the Collector of Malabar on the 22nd February 1884 at Calicut.
>
> "Renters or sub-renters may obtain on application to the Divisional Officer as many licences for distillation by shopkeepers of arrack at 60° under proof, as they may require within a limit to be fixed by the Collector for each Taluk, which will be notified at the time of sale. For the manufacture of arrack at 30° under proof in localities where strong liquor is in favour, Central distilleries must be established by the renters or sub-renters themselves.
>
> "Every shopkeeper licensed to vend arrack at 60° under proof will be required to hold a licence to distil at that strength also and to set up a still, the number of shops being increased to such an extent that each distiller will have a sufficient supply of toddy for distribution in his immediate neighbourhood without excessive cost on account of carriage to the still;"

whether notices to a similar effect have been published to the number of many thousands throughout the districts of India; whether protests have been made on the part of the Native population in all parts of India against these measures; whether a petition signed by all the leading inhabitants of Ahmedabad has been presented to the British Collector in that district, complaining that, through the action of the Government, the drink traffic has greatly increased during the past two or three years—

> "Destroying the morality and happiness of the people, so that, where there were only twelve liquor shops, at present more than thirty-two are in existence, and that the consumption of drink has more than doubled;"

whether it is true that the successful bidders are authorized to

> "Open shops in the crowded parts of cities where a liquor shop had not existed for centuries, where numbers of the labouring classes collect together;"

whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Bombay Gazette* that, in Gujerat, where the working population had been trained to habits of extreme sobriety by the temperance sect of the Swaminarayen—

> "The work of half a century has been upset by the activity of the Revenue Department since 1879;"

whether, in Nadiab, a rising and prosperous town on the Baroda Railway, the united protests of the municipality and leading citizens have been ignored by the British authorities, and the contractor under the drink traffic auction has been allowed to open a manufactory of arrack and other intoxicating drink in the centre of the Brahminical quarter; and, whether this policy, being in direct contradiction to the resolutions of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, particularly the resolution passed in 1843 laying it down that

> "No officer should be allowed to believe that it forms part of his duty to throw temptations in the way of the people, with a view to increase the revenue of his district;"

and to that of the 22nd June 1844, which laid down that "every opportunity be taken to diminish the number of liquor shops," what steps will be taken to remedy the recent practice?

MR. J. K. CROSS, in reply, said, it was impossible to answer, within ordinary limits, the series of Questions which the hon. Member asked, and which related to details of administration which were under the control of the Local Governments in India. In reply to the last, and really the important, part of the Question, he had to state that the policy declared in 1843 and 1844 was still strictly adhered to. The number of liquor shops in

Bengal had been reduced from 9,155 in 1864 to 4,560 last year; and in the Bombay Presidency, they had been reduced from 2,976 in 1877 to 2,474 last year. In both Provinces, as generally throughout India, the excise of liquor had been very considerably enhanced during recent years.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India had not answered any of the allegations contained in the Question. Would the hon. Gentleman give him an opportunity of bringing before the House the subject of the promotion of drunkenness in India for Revenue purposes?

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, it was not in his power to give a day for a discussion of the subject, as the disposal of the time of the House was not within his jurisdiction. The hon. Member's Question would be sent to the Governors of the Presidencies referred to in it for any remarks they might wish to make upon the matters contained in it.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (PARK RAILWAY AND PARLIAMENT STREET IMPROVEMENT) BILL.

Mr. R. H. PAGET, who had a Question on the Paper addressed to the First Commissioner of Works, asking the right hon. Gentleman—

> "If he will be good enough to place in the Library of the House plans showing the proposed improvements in Parliament Street, King Street, and Charles Street, to which the sanction of his Department had been given, in connection with the Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement scheme?"

said, that since his Question had been placed on the Paper he had received from some persons a plan of the proposed scheme. He would now like to ask, Whether it is really a fact that the consent of the Commissioners of Works has been given to the plan which leaves Delahay Street at its present miserable width, and introduces a new street only 40 feet wide?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I believe the plan represents the improvements proposed. No doubt, Delahay Street remains at its present width; but that is no part of the improvement.

Mr. R. H. PAGET: This plan clearly shows a dealing with one part of Delahay Street, and it leaves it at its present width. Does the right hon. Gentleman intend that the consent of his Department shall be given to such a scheme?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Certainly. The improvement in Delahay Street was suggested by the Government to the Metropolitan Board last year, and would have been carried on by them, if the funds had been at their disposal. No doubt, this scheme leaves Delahay Street at its present width. It could not have been widened except at a great additional cost.

THE SUEZ CANAL—THE COMMITTEE OF BRITISH SHIPOWNERS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What authority the so-called Committee of British Shipowners possessed to represent the shipowners of the United Kingdom and of the Colonies; whether they had any legal powers which entitled them to enter into an arrangement or convention with the Suez Canal Company which can be considered as binding on the general body of British shipowners and on the British Government as the largest shareholder; and, whether M. de Lesseps declined to accept the so-called Convention until a letter approving of it was transmitted from the Foreign Office on behalf of Her Majesty's Government?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, I will give all the information I can upon this question. As to the first part, what the right hon. Gentleman designates as the "so-called Committee of British Shipowners" is the "Association of Steamship Owners trading with the East." They do not pretend to act on behalf of any other body; but if the right hon. Gentleman will refer to Mr. Westray's letter of the 12th of October last, at page 16 of Egypt, No. 3 (1884), he will find that the members of the Association are "owners of at least three-fourths of the tonnage annually passing through the Suez Canal." As to the second part, the Association has no legal powers; and the agreement which they made with M. de Lesseps does not assume that they have. As to the third part, the request that Her Majesty's Government would express approval of the arrangements, came originally, not from M. de Lesseps, but from the Association, as the right hon. Gentleman will find on referring to Mr. Westray's letter of the 30th of November last—at page 50 of the Parliamentary Papers—forwarding to the Foreign Office the conditions agreed upon with M. de Lesseps. Her Majesty's Government always intended that the conditions of future management, the negotiation of which had been undertaken at their suggestion, should be carefully examined, and, if found satisfactory, that the Association and M. de Lesseps should be so informed. No one would, of course, expect M. de Lesseps to submit them to his shareholders until that information reached him. My noble Friend (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) has already declined to give any information as to confidential communications which may have passed between the Foreign Office and the official Directors on the subject, and I must adhere to his answer.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, How it is that Her Majesty's Government have delegated to a Committee of Shipowners the right of dealing with property, half of which belongs to Her Majesty's Government; and, also, how far Her Majesty's Government, considering the promises given last year by the Prime Minister, are entitled to deal with the property of the nation without the consent of Parliament?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), in reply, said, that that was a Question of argument which could be only dealt with in debate; and, when the debate arose, he should be quite prepared to take his part in it.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF gave Notice that, on the Motion to go into Committee of Supply, he should ask a Question with regard to the recent dealings of Her Majesty's Government with M. de Lesseps.

POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION (CIRCULARS AND PRINTED MATTER).

Mr. CAUSTON asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that circulars can be posted in open envelopes in most countries of the Postal Union at prices varying from the one-fortieth to one-tenth of a penny per circular; that such circulars are received and delivered by the British Post Office when coming from abroad, but that they cannot be posted in this country; and, if so, could he remove such distinction, which is found to be detrimental to the commerce of this Country?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, my impression is that in most countries of the Postal Union no distinction is made between "circulars" and other printed matter. I am not aware of the precise inland rates for such matter in those countries; but the rate on book packets coming to this country from France, for instance, is practically the same as that on printed matter sent from here to France—namely, ½*d.* for each 2 ozs. in weight. Circulars in open envelopes are, I believe, received in small numbers from abroad, and are allowed to pass. The question of allowing in this country the use of open envelopes, as my hon. Friend proposes, instead of wrappers open at the ends, has been often and fully considered; but, amongst other objections to the adoption of this plan, the practical officers who are experienced in sorting tell me that the extra time which would be required to examine the packets would cause delay which might be serious in view of the extreme pressure under which sorting has to be carried on during the short interval between the time when the post closes and the despatch of the mails.

POST OFFICE—POST CARDS.

Mr. CAUSTON asked the Postmaster General, What technical objection there is to pasting printed matter on the back of Post Cards, provided that the cutting so pasted does not exceed the size of the card, it being at present within the Postal regulations to enclose a card and loose printed slips in a halfpenny Book Post wrapper?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, there are objections to the adoption of the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton); because, if printed or other matter were allowed to be pasted on the back of a post card it would, I think, be difficult to maintain the distinction between a post card and a letter.

NAVY—THE "GILSLAND" TRANSPORT —EMBARKATION OF ROYAL MARINES.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, with reference to the *Gilsland*, Whether it is a fact that the military authorities at Malta refused to permit a certain body of soldiers to proceed in that ship, in which the Marines were afterwards sent?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. We have heard nothing of any such occurrence; and it is in the highest degree improbable that the military authorities were consulted as to the embarkation of soldiers in the *Gilsland*, because, from the first, express directions were given by the Admiralty that she should convey Marines.

Captain PRICE gave Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply, he would call attention to the matter, and ask, Whether it was not the case that the usual survey was not made?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he could answer the Question at once. He did not think there would have been time to receive any such survey at the Admiralty before the Marines were embarked for Egypt.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—COMPULSORY PILOTAGE.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the great interests involved by the thirty-first Clause of the Merchant Shipping Bill, entitled "Abolition of compulsory pilotage," he will consider either the advisability of striking that Clause out of the Bill, or of establishing a scale of compensation for the pilots who will otherwise be deprived of their living?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he feared the hon. Gentleman had not seen an answer which he gave, a few days ago, to a duputation of pilots who had waited upon him (Mr. Chamberlain) in regard to the matter. He invited the pilots to prepare a scheme of compensation, to which he promised full consideration.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he had received a deputation of pilots the day after the right hon. Gentleman, and he had then put the Question on the Paper.

EGYPT—THE PRESS LAWS—THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Egyptian Press Law is still in existence; whether, according to it, three "warnings" must precede the suppression of any newspaper subject to its provisions; whether such "warnings" were given to the *Bosphore Egyptien* before its recent suppression; whether the decree ordering such suppression emanated from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as provided by the Press Law, or from the Ministry of the Interior, of which Mr. Clifford Lloyd is the Under Secretary; whether such decree has been sanctioned by Sir Evelyn Baring; whether the specific offence for which the suspension has been ordered was the publication of an article in the issue of the condemned newspaper for the 18th of February last, in which the influence of Sir Evelyn Baring on Egyptian Administration was unfavourably, but still moderately and respectfully, commented on; and, whether he will lay Copies of such article, of the decree suppressing the newspaper, and of any Despatches received from Cario on the subject, upon the Table of the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, I have already stated that no despatches have been received from Sir Evelyn Baring on the subject; and, in the meanwhile, it must be assumed that the proceedings in question have been conducted according to law. When they arrive, they will be examined with a view to their publication in the ordinary course.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked whether any complaint had been received from France in reference to the treatment of these miserable papers?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No communication has been received.

Mr. M'COAN said, as the paper had been suppressed for 10 or 12 days, he would put the same Question on Thursday.

LUNACY ACTS—ALEXANDER KAY, AN ALLEGED LUNATIC.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the narrative of Alexander Kay, as published in *The Westminster and Lambeth Gazette* of 16th November and 16th December 1883, in which his detention for upwards of five years in various lunatic asylums is described, and his subsequent escape from Brookwood Asylum; and, whether the allegations contained in the said narrative are in accordance with fact?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had not seen the particular narrative referred to in the Question of the hon. Baronet, though many such narratives, written by Alexander Kay, had been received at the Home Office. He thought he could safely answer that there was no truth in the allegations contained in the narrative. The case had been frequently examined, and there was no reason to believe that the man was improperly detained.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—THE SALT TAX.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Salt Tax in India is now exactly double what it was in the time of the East India Company in 1858; whether the Salt Tax is now two rupees per maund against one rupee in 1858; and, whether nine-tenths of the price Natives pay for salt go to Government as a tax?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Sir, to the first two clauses of the Question I must reply in the negative. The Salt Tax was in 1858 in Bengal two rupees eight annas per maund; in Upper India two rupees; in Madras and Bombay 12 annas to one rupee. It has now been equalized throughout India at two rupees. To the last clause I must also reply in the negative. The mean average selling price of salt, including the tax, was in December, 1883, in Madras, two rupees 13 annas; in Bombay, three rupees 12 annas; in the North-West Provinces, three rupees 12 annas; in the Punjab, three rupees two annas; and in Bengal, three rupees 15 annas.

BURIAL BOARDS—NEW CEMETERIES—LEGISLATION.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What conclusion the Government have arrived at as to meeting, the difficulties of local authorities in obtaining land for new cemeteries; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation on the subject during the present Session?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was not aware that any practical difficulties had arisen in the way of burial boards getting ground for new cemeteries. Difficulties had arisen on other points; but he was not aware that there had been any difficulty as to the physical acquisition of land.

STATE OF IRELAND—PARTY DEMONSTRATIONS—ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a placard extensively circulated in Derry, and signed "Robert M'Clintock, C.G.M." summoning "the Orangemen of the North of Ireland" to assemble at Derry, on the 17th March, to oppose a Catholic celebration of St. Patrick's Day, and promising the Orange sympathisers an escort of Derry Orangemen to and from their trains; whether he is aware that the Catholic celebration referred to is one of a non-political character, such as has for many years taken place on this anniversary, and that St. Patrick's Day is celebrated by a public ceremonial at Dublin Castle; whether the Robert M'Clintock, C.G.M. whose name is appended to the Orange proclamation, is a justice of the peace and deputy lieutenant, and whether his conduct in summoning strangers to Derry to assemble in dangerous proximity to a lawfully convened meeting, and in avowed hostility thereto, is in contravention of the rule recently laid down by the Lord Chancellor for the guidance of magistrates in such cases; and, whether the Government will take steps to prevent the peace of Derry from being disturbed, and the proposed celebration interfered with, by the means suggested in the placard?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, a counter-demonstration of Orangemen has been summoned for the 17th of March, St. Patrick's Day, at Derry. Although it is the custom to allow the celebration of the anniversary of St. Patrick's Day at Derry, a reference to the terms of the placard announcing this year's celebration would not justify the statement in the Question, that the present celebration, which, in the placard announcing it, is called a "monster demonstration," is one of a non-political character. One of the Orangemen who signed the proclamation calling the counter-demonstration is Mr. R. M'Clintock, who is a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant, and His Excellency has determined to bring his conduct in this matter before the Lord Chancellor. As regards the proposed demonstration on the 17th of March, the Irish Government is of opinion that it could not be held without involving serious danger to the public peace, and they are determined to prohibit both demonstrations, as was done in the case of analogous demonstrations in December, and will further have the City of Derry proclaimed under the 8th section of the Prevention of Crime Act.

Mr. O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, If the Nationalists get up a counter-demonstration, will the Irish Government prohibit the celebration in the Upper Castle Yard, which is far more offensive to the Irish people?

Mr. HEALY: Would not the right hon. Gentleman, in view of preserving the peace, consider the prohibiting of the Orange demonstration only; and, whether, if in any part of Ireland, when a counter-demonstration is held, the Government will suppress both demonstrations?

[No reply.]

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENTS IN THE CO. LIMERICK.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in 1881, four tenants of the Rev. Richard Fitzgerald, Tarbert, county Limerick, namely, Gerard Leahy, Patrick Heartney, and Bridget M'Cay, of Ballydonahoo, Glin, county Limerick, made application to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed; whether the originating notices were served in December 1881; whether the hearing of these cases has taken place; whether, since these tenants pay a rent much higher than the Government valuation of their holdings, he can state when these cases are likely to be proceeded with by the Limerick Commissioners?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that he was informed by the Land Commissioners that certain applications for the fixing of fair rents by tenants in the County Limerick referred to in the hon. Member's Question were made on the 23rd of January in the present year, and not in December, 1881, as stated. The cases would, in the ordinary way, be sent for hearing in the next list issued for the County Limerick.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE RIOTS AT LONDONDERRY—CASE OF DOHERTY.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, On what grounds Doherty was sent to Sligo for trial, involving large expenditure and great inconvenience to witnesses, instead of sending him for trial at Londonderry, where the alleged offence was committed; and, have the jurors of Londonderry shown themselves unworthy of confidence on any occasion.

Mr. HEALY: Before the hon. and learned Gentleman answers the Question, perhaps he will state also why similar cases were brought from Galway to Cork, and from Westmeath and Sligo to Dublin, as also all the other cases in which the venue was changed?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland was of opinion the interests of justice would be better served by trying the prisoner Doherty in some place other than Londonderry, where considerable excitement on the subject of the riots prevailed, and for that reason he changed the venue to Sligo. I am not aware of any occasion on which the jurors of Londonderry have shown themselves unworthy of confidence.

IRELAND—THE REGISTRAR GENERAL (DUBLIN).

Mr. HEALY (for Mr. Dawson) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether sec. 10 of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. permits appointment of assistant in case of illness or absence of the Registrar General, Dublin; and, whether the Registrar General has been ill or absent during assumption by secretary of the title of Assistant Registrar General?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the section mentioned in the Question empowers the Registrar General to appoint a fit person to act as his assistant in case of his illness or absence. It does not require him to wait until he is ill or absent to make the appointment, or to renew it on each occasion when the services of the deputy are required. Such a construction of the section would be not only contrary to the view of its meaning hitherto adopted, but would be highly inconvenient to the Public Service. The present Registrar General has been occasionally absent for brief periods. On such occasions his duly appointed assistant has acted for him. The Registrar General informs me that no unauthorized use has been made of the title.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—CATTLE DISEASE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, If he will be good enough to lay upon the Table of the House a statement of the several memorials or resolutions, respecting the danger of the introduction of contagious diseases by the importation of foreign animals, received at the Privy Council Office in the twelve months ending the 29th February last, distinguishing for each county the number of such memorials or resolutions that have been received?

MR. JAMES HOWARD: Before the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster answers the Question, perhaps I may be allowed to put another, bearing on the same subject—namely, Whether information has reached his Department of a serious outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Texas?

MR. DODSON: Sir, I should be quite ready to give my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. R. H. Paget) the statement he asks for; but it will take considerable time to prepare, because very often the resolutions on this subject are contained in Memorials relating to a great number of miscellaneous points, and these Memorials will have to be gone over. In answer to the hon. Member for Bedfordshire (Mr. James Howard), I have to state that we have heard that some cases of foot-and-mouth disease have occurred at Texas, but we have received no particulars with regard to the matter.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government will take any steps this Session to amend the Labourers (Ireland) Act so as to make it workable?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am not aware on what grounds the hon. Member (Mr. O'Sullivan) designates the Act as unworkable, and I should be glad if he informed me of it by letter. I may say that the Local Government Board hold a different opinion.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Many Boards of Guardians find that they cannot use it.

MR. TREVELYAN: It has been very largely availed of also; but I should be glad if the hon. Member informed me by letter where the contrary has occurred.

THE IRISH CHURCH COMMISSIONERS—MR. EYRE W. PRESTON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the statement that Mr. Eyre W. Preston has spent thirty-eight years in the public service, When he first entered it; what departments he has served in; by whom he was recommended on each occasion; when he entered each department; when, and under what circumstances, he quitted each; and, how often during the entire period, he has been discontinued from employment in the public service?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, it would have been more strictly accurate if I had added that of Mr. Preston's professional career of 38 years, the greater part had been spent in the service of the State. Mr. Preston is a civil engineer, and his earlier engagements appear to have been professional. His public employment was as follows:—From 1846 to 1851, Drainage Department of the Board of Works; from 1852 to 1855, Valuation Department; from 1867 to 1874 he was in India, where he was engaged in the Public Works Department and upon railways, guaranteed and the appointments sanctioned by the Government of India; in 1874 he was given temporary employment by the Church Commissioners; in 1876 he was placed on their permanent Staff, and has remained on the Staff through the changes which constituted the Land Commission. Upon each occasion of his services being dispensed with, it was on account of reduction of Staff, or because the work for which he was employed was finished. I cannot state the names of all the persons who may have recommended him for public employment during his long and multifarious services; but I can say that he was recommended by the Heads of the Public

Works and Valuation Departments in which he had been engaged.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED FIRING AT MR. CHARLES JONES HENRY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Charles Jones Henry, of Artarmon, Linadell, county Sligo, deputy collector of county cess, some time since informed the police at Breaffry Station that, while driving home from a fair, he was fired at, wounded, and robbed of a sum of £81, being county cess which he had collected; and, whether his statement was investigated by Colonel Forbes, S.R.M. and Mr. G. F. Molony, R.M., and what conclusion they arrived at, particularly with regard to the attack alleged to have been made, and the wounds alleged to have been inflicted?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is true that about a year ago Mr. Henry alleged that he was attacked and robbed, and that his complaint was investigated by Colonel Forbes, who was not satisfied that any such occurrence had taken place. Mr. Molony, Resident Magistrate, states, however, that he could come to no conclusion but that the alleged outrage had been committed.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask whether this outrage is included in the Returns?

[No reply.]

PUBLIC HEALTH—DRAINAGE WORKS AT TWICKENHAM.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether any steps have been taken to ensure that the effluent water discharged from the drainage works at Twickenham into the Thames is pure; and, if so, with what effect?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, since Questions were asked on this subject last Session the district has been visited by myself, as well as by one of the Engineering Inspectors of the Board. It appeared that although works and machinery for treating the sewage by a chemical process had been provided, and were, in fact, all ready for use, no chemicals had ever been employed for the clarification of the sewage. The Board communicated with the local board, and reminded them that it was only on the understanding that the sewage would be treated either by application to land, or by chemical processes, that they had sanctioned the loans for the works, and urged them without delay to adopt measures for effectively purifying the sewage before its discharge into the river. The Board received on the 28th of February a communication from the Thames Conservators, in which it is stated that a sample of the effluent taken on the 25th of January was submitted to the analyst of the Conservators, and found by him to be—

> "Much better purified than the previous sample received by him in September last, but that it would be still further improved if it were more efficiently aerated in the settling tanks."

The analyst, however, considered that no objection could be taken to the discharge into the river at the point where sewage is now discharged of an effluent similar in character to the sample.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will arrange to take the Second Reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill as first Order of the Day on Thursday next, if the Debate on the Supplementary Estimates is concluded on Monday?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, if the whole of the Supplementary Estimates are passed to-night, the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill will be taken on Thursday. I am afraid, however, that as the number of the Supplementary Estimates is very large, it will be necessary to make Supply the first Order of the Day for Thursday.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked whether the Government would agree to take the second reading of the Bill on the first Government night after the Supplementary Estimates had been disposed of?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am afraid that it will be necessary next week to proceed with the Army and Navy Estimates.

Mr. GORST asked whether the Bill would take precedence of the Merchant Shipping Bill?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think that the hon. and learned Gentleman had better give Notice of his Question.

Her Majesty's Government are anxious to proceed with the second reading of this Bill as soon as possible; but I cannot give any promise on the subject.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the noble Marquess state upon what day the Army Estimates will be taken?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In my reply to the Question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley), I explained that there has been greater delay than usual in laying these Estimates upon the Table. They are, however, in print, and a number of them will be at the Vote Office to-night for the use of hon. Members who desire to have a copy of them at once. The whole distribution will be made on Wednesday. We propose to move the Army Estimates on Monday.

MR. W. H. SMITH: When will the Army Estimates be taken?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: On Thursday week.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Thursday is the day fixed for the second reading of the Reform Bill. I presume from the answer of the noble Marquess that the Estimates will take precedence of that measure.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes; it will be necessary to take the Navy Estimates next week.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN AT SINKAT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will direct Admiral Sir William Hewett, now commanding at Suakin, to make every effort, including power of ransom, for the release of the wives and families of the Commandant and the garrison of Sinkat, who have been sold into slavery by Osman Digna?

MR. O'DONNELL said, that he desired, at the same time, to ask, whether the Government would make every effort, including power of ransom, for the release of the wives and families of those who were being sold into slavery under General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) may be sure that Admiral Hewett will be instructed to do everything within his power for the release of the unfortunate persons referred to; but it is impossible, under present circumstances, to state what exact steps will be taken for that purpose.

MR. GIBSON: Has he yet been instructed?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he had asked whether the Government had refused to make an offer of ransom. Only a few hundred pounds would be required for the release of these unfortunate persons.

MR. O'DONNELL asked, whether the Government refused to take into consideration the case of the wives and families of those who were being sold into slavery under General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There has been no refusal on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I distinctly stated that the attention of Admiral Hewett had been directed to the subject, and that instructions had been given to him with reference to it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: May we have those instructions?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot make any promise with reference to them at this moment.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday next I shall move for a copy of the instructions to which the noble Lord has just referred.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In regard to the Notice just given, I do not think it would be possible at present to lay those instructions on the Table of the House. They form part of the confidential communications that have passed on the subject of the military operations, and those instructions could not be separated from the remainder of the telegram in which they are contained.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN) — THE LIST OF CASUALTIES.

MR. GRANTHAM asked, Whether an official list of those wounded during the recent operations in Egypt would be published?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, all information that we have received has been published, including a list of the killed. When the full list of the wounded has been received, it will be published.

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THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I think that the hon. and learned Gentleman had better give Notice of his Question, Her Majesty's Government are anxious to proceed with the second reading of this Bill as soon as possible; but I cannot give any promise on the subject.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the noble Marquess state upon what day the Army Estimates will be taken?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In my reply to the Question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley), I explained that there has been greater delay than usual in laying these Estimates upon the Table. They are, however, in print, and a number of them will be at the Vote Office to-night for the use of hon. Members who desire to have a copy of them at once. The whole distribution will be made on Wednesday. We propose to move the Army Estimates on Monday.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: When will the Army Estimates be taken?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: On Thursday week.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Thursday is the day fixed for the second reading of the Reform Bill. I presume from the answer of the noble Marquess that the Estimates will take precedence of that measure.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes; it will be necessary to take the Navy Estimates next week.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN AT SINKAT.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will direct Admiral Sir William Hewett, now commanding at Suakin, to make every effort, including power of ransom, for the release of the wives and families of the Commandant and the garrison of Sinkat, who have been sold into slavery by Osman Digna?

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that he desired, at the same time, to ask, whether the Government would make every effort, including power of ransom, for the release of the wives and families of those who were being sold into slavery under General Gordon?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) may be sure that Admiral Hewett will be instructed to do everything within his power for the release of the unfortunate persons referred to; but it is impossible, under present circumstances, to state what exact steps will be taken for that purpose.

Mr. GIBSON: Has he yet been instructed?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he had asked whether the Government had refused to make an offer of ransom. Only a few hundred pounds would be required for the release of these unfortunate persons.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked, whether the Government refused to take into consideration the case of the wives and families of those who were being sold into slavery under General Gordon?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There has been no refusal on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I distinctly stated that the attention of Admiral Hewett had been directed to the subject, and that instructions had been given to him with reference to it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: May we have those instructions?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot make any promise with reference to them at this moment.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday next I shall move for a copy of the instructions to which the noble Lord has just referred.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In regard to the Notice just given, I do not think it would be possible at present to lay those instructions on the Table of the House. They form part of the confidential communications that have passed on the subject of the military operations, and those instructions could not be separated from the remainder of the telegram in which they are contained.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN) — THE LIST OF CASUALTIES.

Mr. GRANTHAM asked, Whether an official list of those wounded during the recent operations in Egypt would be published?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, all information that we have received has been published, including a list of the killed. When the full list of the wounded has been received, it will be published.

INDIA — ADMINISTRATION OF THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT (INDIA), No. XIV., 1868, IN BOMBAY.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, in respect of the retention by the Bombay Government, out of the annual subsidy due to the municipality, of a large sum to administer the Contagious Diseases Acts against the will of the justices of the city, the noble Lord the then Secretary for India conveyed to the Bombay Government his opinion, concurring with that of the Government of India, "that the Government of Bombay should withdraw their orders, and refund the corporation the sums retained;" whether the same Secretary, by despatch, dated Oct. 26, 1882, gave permission to the Viceroy and Government of India at their request to pass an Act to suspend the Contagious Diseases Act (India), No. XIV., 1868; whether the Act has been accordingly suspended by any and what law; whether the position taken up in either of the above cases has been reversed by the present Secretary of State for India, and, whether, since the Vote of this House in the last Session on the subject of the English Acts, any further correspondence had taken place on the subject with the Indian Government?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Sir, I must refer my hon. Friend to the Return on this subject presented to Parliament last Session. No further Correspondence regarding it has passed between the Secretary of State and the Government of either India or Bombay, since Lord Kimberley's despatches of the 3rd of May, 1883, printed at page 81 of the Return, nor has any law been passed to suspend the Contagious Diseases Act.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PATRONAGE) —MR. MESSENT, OFFICIAL RECEIVER AT IPSWICH.

Mr. WEST said, that he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether he has made any inquiries, or whether he proposes to take any steps in reference to Mr. Messent, the Official Receiver of the Ipswich district, with regard to whom the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), in a speech in that House on Friday last, had used the following words:—

> "He was at one time so successful in business at Birmingham that he was obliged to ask for the indulgence of his creditors?"

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I have received a letter from Mr. Messent, the Receiving Officer of the Ipswich district, to the following effect:—

> "I enclose a copy of a letter I have addressed to Mr. Dixon-Hartland. I am not clear whether that gentleman meant that I have compounded with my creditors, or that I have asked for time to meet my engagements. In either case my denial is equally emphatic, and extends both to my creditors as a body, or to every individual among them. Upon the suggestion of Lord George Hamilton that I was a stranger imported here by Mr. Collings, I may observe that the greater part of my life has been spent in this town, in which I was born, and from which I believe I have never been away for three months in succession. I am not aware that Mr. Collings knew I was connected with the neighbourhood until several months after I had left Birmingham, and returned here to reside, which I did in April, 1881."

I think the House will share with me the regret that so serious an attack should have been made on a public official without sufficient investigation. With the permission of the House, I wish to make two other corrections arising out of this debate. It was stated that Mr. George Mallam, who was appointed Receiver for Oxford, was the political agent for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department. I have to-day received a letter from Mr. Hughes, who is, I believe, the Mayor of Oxford, and who said that Mr. Dixon-Hartland appeared to have remarked that the person appointed to the office of Receiver had acted as agent for the Secretary of State for the Home Department. He added that Mr. George Mallam, who was appointed Receiver, never acted for Sir William Harcourt. It was Mr. Thomas Mallam who was his agent. Mr. Hughes goes on to say that when he received a letter from the Board of Trade asking for information as to the fitness of Mr. Mallam for the appointment, he called a meeting of the Estates Committee, consisting of all the members of the Town Council, and a very prominent Conservative proposed that Mr. Mallam's appointment should be approved. This was carried, and the only member who voted against the Motion was a Liberal. The letter concluded by saying that, all things being taken into consideration, there could be no doubt that Mr. George Mallam was the most eligible candidate, he having done more bankruptcy work than any other man in the town. I have also received a letter from Mr. Herbert Bramley, who complains that I was reported to have said of him that he had acted as agent for both political Parties. He informs me that he has been recently an active worker for the Conservative side, but that he never received from them any remuneration for his services. He was, however, my political agent, and I have remunerated him, though not at all beyond the services which he rendered to me. I am very sorry to have troubled the House on this matter; but I think the House will see that it is necessary, in consequence of the failure of the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) to give me any Notice beforehand of the cases he intended to bring forward.

MR. RAIKES gave Notice that, to-morrow, he would ask Mr. Attorney General, Whether he had brought under the consideration of the hon. Member for Evesham the following words said to have been used by the hon. Member in the debate on Friday last:—

> "Take the last election for Hereford. After the last election, a petition was presented asking that the two Members returned for that place might be unseated; but it was withdrawn at the last moment, in consequence of an arrangement signed on behalf of the Liberal Party by Mr. Scobie."

He would ask, whether the Attorney General was prepared to assent to the appointment of a Committee to test the accuracy of this statement; and what steps he proposed to take to secure purity of election, and to vindicate the character of Members of that House?

MR. PULLEY: I rise to say that I was not in my place on Friday night when the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) referred to the circumstances connected with the Election Petition at the city of Hereford. Had I been in my place, I should have risen to say that I was not connected at all with the withdrawal to which he alluded, and that any agreement which might have been entered into was entered into without my knowledge, authority, or consent. I beg to say also, at the same time, that I think the hon. Member for Evesham, if he is in his place, can bear witness that my Colleague and myself resisted every pressure that was brought upon us to be connected in any way with any compromise.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL—LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA—MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S STATEMENT AT BIRMINGHAM.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, What were the data on which he based his statement in a recent letter to the Birmingham Trades Council, that there were grave reasons for apprehension that the waste of life at sea would be greater during the last two or three years than it had ever been before?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I will endeavour to answer the Question of the noble Lord, although I think he will see it is a subject which it would be more convenient to deal with in argument than in answer to a Question. Stated briefly, my reasons for the opinion which I have formed are these. For some years shipowning has been the most prosperous and profitable industry in the country. This has led to an over-production of ships, the supply has now exceeded the demand, and over-production has been followed by over-competition, and a great reduction of freights, which are now, in many cases, unremunerative. If the practice of over-insurance continues, the result must be that the loss of a ship will, to a greater extent than ever, be an advantage to the owner. The tendency of this, coupled with the necessity for strict economy in all items of ordinary expenditure, will be to bring about a relaxation of the precautions necessary to secure safety, and, other things being equal, will lead to increased loss of life and property. This is my firm conviction, and it justifies my anxiety for immediate legislation.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON: I wish to ask another Question arising out of the previous one, and the answer just given to it. Is it not a fact that the Returns issued by the right hon. Gentleman's own Department, the Board of Trade, do show that, in the year 1882, there was a much smaller loss of life than in the previous year; and, whether the average loss during the last five years has greatly decreased in comparison with the average of the five preceding years?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, to answer those Questions fully, I must engage in more particulars than respect for the time of the House would justify me in doing. But I may say that the first statement of the noble Lord is correct. The loss of life in 1882 was somewhat less than the loss of life in 1881; but taking three-yearly periods, the loss of life in the last three years was greater than the loss of life in any three years to which the statistics apply. There can be no doubt, in my opinion, that, on the whole, there has been an increase rather than a diminution in the loss of life during recent years.

Subsequently—

Mr. NORWOOD rose and said: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to the answer he gave just now to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Claud Hamilton), Whether I correctly understood him to say something to this effect—that, in his opinion, the unremunerative state of the shipping trade at the present moment will have the effect of inducing shipowners during the next two or three years to over-insure their ships, with the view of causing them to be lost for their own benefit, and by that means risking the lives of seamen? I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he still adheres to that statement?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; I did not say anything of the kind. ["Oh, oh!"] I will repeat the exact words I used in answer to the noble Lord's Question. [The right hon. Gentleman read the latter part of his reply, as already given.]

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—KHARTOUM.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any telegrams have been received from General Gordon respecting the present position of Khartoum; and, if so, whether the noble Marquess would communicate them to the House?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Many and voluminous telegrams have been recently received from General Gordon; but I cannot say that I have received any bearing on the present state of Khartoum. If there were, I certainly could not answer a Question of this sort without Notice.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Colonel KINGSCOTE asked, Whether he had rightly understood the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) just now to say that there was no prospect of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill being taken on Thursday?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that he had not said it was certain that the Bill would not be brought forward on Thursday. Unless, however, the Supplementary Estimates were disposed of to-night, it could not be the first Order on Thursday.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked, Whether negotiations had been in progress between Her Majesty's Government and the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) as to withdrawing the opposition to the second reading?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he was unable to give the noble Lord any particulars, but believed that the block was still on the Paper.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked, Whether the noble Marquess was aware that, on the 29th of February, the Prime Minister stated that, after leave had been given to introduce the Representation of the People Bill, he would take a stage of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. He trusted that the latter measure would be taken as the first Order on the first Government day after the Supplementary Estimates had been voted?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he was afraid the state of Supply would make it absolutely necessary to take Supply as the first Order on Thursday and Monday next, and on Thursday week. He hoped, however, there would be nothing to prevent the possibility of taking the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill at a later hour next Thursday.

Mr. R. H. PAGET asked, Whether the noble Marquess would give an undertaking, in harmony with the promise made by the Prime Minister, that the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill should be taken previously to a further stage of the Reform Bill?

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the noble Marquess, Whether he was aware that the second reading would have been taken on Thursday night if a Conservative Member had not talked till 12.30?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, that he could not make any general statement, and hoped that the hon. Member would kindly repeat his Question to-morrow.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN).

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he had seen it stated that an attack was expected to be made on the Arabs to-morrow, and he thought it was desirable that the Government should state what was the object of the attack?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am afraid I can give no further answer to the Question than the statement I made last Thursday in Committee. I stated on that occasion the nature of the information we have received from Admiral Hewett and the nature of the instructions given to him.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I presume it is a defensive operation?

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY — ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN).

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £370,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £164,750, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, to meet additional Expenditure for Army Services."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The question which my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) placed before the Committee on Thursday last, in so temperate and comprehensive a manner, was intended to elicit from Her Majesty's Government some further information in reference to the affairs of Egypt; and I do not think that anyone who listened to the debate which followed will be prepared to admit that my right hon. and gallant Friend was altogether so successful as to render unnecessary any further attempt in the same direction. We do not ask the Government for information concerning the details of the campaign now being carried on in Africa; but what we do ask for is, that the Government should be prepared to make an intelligible statement of the policy they intend to pursue in Egypt. The only answer which, as yet, we have been able to extract from the Prime Minister is that, until the campaign is over, we cannot measure our position. Put into homelier phrase, I understand that statement to mean that, when the fighting is over, we may be told what we have been fighting for. I have consulted the various Blue Books which have been laid upon the Table of the House, to find out what the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt is, and the only definition of that policy which I can find is one given last month by Earl Granville to the Italian Ambassador—that our policy is an elastic policy, to be guided by circumstances. Now, I think there is a ray of hope in the definition of "an elastic policy to be guided by circumstances," because one of the most important of these guiding circumstances is the opinion of the House of Commons. I, therefore, venture to lay before the Committee the position we now occupy. I believe we are in this position, as regards this Vote of Credit—for I shall continue to term it a Vote of Credit—that, whenever military operations have previously been carried on, the Government have always been able to show, to the satisfaction of their own Supporters, that the object of the campaign was to promote national interests, or to protect or extend the Imperial rule of the country. But no one will pretend that the campaign in which we are now embarked is for the promotion of national interests. It is altogether dissociated from national interests; for we are utilizing our resources, and spending the blood of our soldiers, for the purpose of keeping together the debris of the repudiated policy of an impotent foreign Government, and a policy which was enforced against the wishes of every English *employé* of that Government. English money and English soldiers are being used for the purpose of pulling the chestnuts out of a fire into which the Egyptian Government ought never to have been allowed to put them. That is not only the opinion of the majority of the House, but of the men who are on the spot. There are two important telegrams in the papers to-day—one from General Gordon, and one from General Graham—and I would ask the attention of the Committee to two extracts from these telegrams. General Gordon says—

> "Be sure of one thing; if Her Majesty's Government do not act promptly, General Graham's victory will go for naught, and with the useless expenditure of blood the effect of it will evaporate."

He goes on to say—

> "We cannot blame them (the Natives) for rising, when no definite sign is shown of establishing a permanent Government there."

The telegram in *The Standard* newspaper is of a different nature, but it is to this effect—

> "Neither officers nor men have the slightest desire to kill any more of these gallant Arabs, who are an infinitely superior race to the men of the miserable and treacherous Tokar garrison whom they were supposed to have relieved."

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Is the noble Lord opposite quoting from a telegram sent by General Graham?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No; it is a telegram from a Correspondent of *The Standard*, who is with General Graham; but I expect that the Correspondent is pretty well acquainted with the views of the officers of General Graham's Force. Therefore, as I said before, we are not fighting to promote any national object. The Egyptian Government having exhausted its resources, both in men and money, the English taxpayer and the English soldier are to make up the deficiency and to keep together the remains of a policy which, at any time during the last year, Her Majesty's Government, by holding up a finger, could have put a stop to. The difficulty arises from the ridiculous system of Government which we have established in Egypt, by which the functions of Native officials are to resist the reforms which their European colleagues desire to introduce, and to continue the abuses which it is the object of the English officials to check. The heads of the Egyptian Departments initiate troubles and difficulties, which the English officials find it impossible to solve. This House has a right to insist, before voting this money, upon a declaration from Her Majesty's Government, either that they will discontinue or reverse the policy which has brought disaster in the past, and must, in the future, produce the like effect. Not only anyone who has taken part in the previous debates upon Egyptian matters, but anyone who has followed those debates, must be struck with the fact that, from first to last, the House has been induced to interfere in Egypt on false pretences. First, the country was told that the bombardment of Alexandria was an act of defence. That ridiculous plea was put forward to keep the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) in the Cabinet. What was the consequence? The Government were prevented from taking steps for the preservation of Alexandria; and, in the end, Alexandria, which they wished to preserve, was destroyed, and their late Colleague, whom they wished to keep, was lost. In the next place, the Prime Minister asserted that we were not at war; and, yet, the right hon. Gentleman has conferred more honours and rewards upon the men who were engaged in operations which were not war than are ordinarily conferred after an arduous campaign. We were told, in the first instance, that our only object was to put down the despotic rule of a pretender and military adventurer—Arabi. We did put down that adventurer; but, in doing so, we found that he was so connected with the military and civil institutions of the country, that, in suppressing him, we annihilated them, and we put up nothing in their place. We were led from one blunder to another, because, from the first to the last, Her Majesty's Government refused to look the facts in the face. I confess I felt some little shame when the Prime Minister got up on Thursday to say that the Government had inherited all their difficulties from the late Government. Now, railway accidents frequently occur in this country, involving serious loss of life; and the effort to connect the Soudan massacres with the establishment of the Dual Control is very much the same as if, when a disastrous railway accident occurs, and is occasioned by the incapacity of the officials, the directors were to contend that the fault did not rest with them, or their subordinates, but with George Stephenson, who invented the locomotive. That is precisely the same as the defence of the Prime Minister, when he says that all the difficulty has been brought about by the Government inheriting the policy of their Predecessors. I think it can be shown that the difficulty has arisen because Her Majestys Government did not continue the policy they inherited from their Predecessors, and because they chose to give a different character to the Control that had been established, in order to extricate themselves from political difficulties at home. Up to the commencement of November, 1881, the present Government continued the policy of their Predecessors, and at that time there were two despatches — one by the English Government and the other by the French Government—which placed the Egyptian Government in full possession of their views. The French despatch said that the national aspirations of Egypt were much too real, and, in some sense, too well justified, to warrant their being neglected, or to admit of the idea of suppressing them. From November until the end of December, 1881, no further difficulty occurred in Egypt. On the 31st of December, Sir Edward Malet telegraphed home that the Khedive was in a cheerful mood, and he took a hopeful view of the situation. But there was a difficulty at home, a hitch in the negotiation of the Commercial Treaty with France. M. Gambetta was anxious to negotiate that Treaty, and it occurred to him that if he could give to France a tangible proof of the value of the political alliance with England, it might help to overcome the objections which the French Protectionists took to the Commercial Treaty. Therefore, without disclosing a reason, he went to Lord Lyons, and suggested that a Joint Note should be sent, in the name of the French and the English Governments, to the Government of Egypt; and to this Lord Granville was persuaded to assent. The Note was presented on the 8th January, 1882, and within a fortnight it produced a complete revulsion. The first object of the Note was to emphasize the unity of the action of the two Powers; the second, to strengthen the personal influence of the Khedive, by giving him a guarantee against internal and external danger; and the third, to prevent the interposition of the Porte as the Suzerain. This was a total inversion of the principles which the French and English Governments had laid down two months before. The Joint Note was presented to the Egyptian Government on the 8th January. Three days afterwards there was a collision between the Council of the Khedive and the two Controllers, because the Assembly of Notables wished to have some control over that part of the Budget which did not relate to the service for the Debt; but M. Gambetta would not hear of it. Without consulting us, he telegraphed to the French Representative to resist at all risks; and Sir Edward Malet then said that, unless a compromise were effected, armed intervention would become a necessity. Then M. Gambetta was turned out of Office; and the first act of his Successor was to repudiate his action, and to say that he had misconceived the duties of the Control in Egypt. We were left to face the storm raised by M. Gambetta; and that was the primary cause of our difficulty. The result of this underhand and tortuous policy was that Her Majesty's Government altogether failed to get what they wanted. What they wanted was a Commercial Treaty, and to avoid a war with Egypt. We got a war with Egypt, and lost the Commercial Treaty with France. Therefore, the statement that these difficulties were an inheritance from the late Government is a pure fiction, which may serve the purposes of debate, but will not stand the test of examination for a moment. And now as to the elastic policy. It certainly has been most elastic during the last eight months. On the 11th June instructions were sent to our Representative in Egypt to take and give no advice to the Government of Egypt; but at the beginning of January we sent a telegram to the Khedive, thanking him for his patriotic conduct in adopting the policy of Her Majesty's Government as to the Soudan. Then Her Majesty's Representative was warned to give no advice; and two months later we had to send troops to and spend money in the Soudan. It is clear that if Her Majesty's Government had not evaded their responsibilities 8 or 10 months ago the disasters in the Soudan would never have occurred; and now we are asked to assent to a campaign which may lead us anywhere and end in anything. The House has a right to insist that the Government should inform them what is the ultimate object of their policy in Egypt. The present position there is an inversion of every moral and political principle that has ever before regulated the action of the Government of this country. We sent a number of Englishmen to represent us in Egypt, to supply the brains, to make reforms, and the machinery for carrying out those reforms, which alone could keep the Egyptian Government in its place, and yet we left the control of affairs more or less in the hands of incapable Orientals. Now, who are the governing classes in Cairo? The majority of them are Turks and Circassians, those very men whom, six years ago, the Prime Minister spoke of as the "anti-human specimen of humanity." We allowed these persons to check and frustrate our benevolent intentions in regard to Egypt and the administration of the country. I cannot exactly understand what object the Government have in continuing to act on their present lines. We may have different views; but, as far as I can see, the action or re-action which characterizes the Government policy in Egypt is not likely to promote the objects of a single section of the House. There are a certain number of hon. Gentlemen like the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who wish to see the troops removed from Egypt as soon as possible; there is another section of hon. Members who are anxious that we should do the work we have undertaken, and that before we evacuate Egypt we shall lay the foundation of a good Administration and Government; and then, again, there are hon. Gentlemen whom I may call the thick-and-thin supporters of Her Majesty's Government, who are very anxious that they should adopt such a line of action as will not render it an impossible task to defend them at the approaching General Election. I would ask any of these Gentlemen, are their views in the smallest degree consulted or promoted by the action which the Government is taking? It is perfectly clear that the longer we have been in Egypt, the further off we are from getting out of it. We have not carried out a single reform as far as I know, although it is said that some progress has been made with an alphabetical list of voters. Then, why are Her Majesty's Government to continue this — if I may so call it—vacuous and fatuous policy? The reason appears to be that the Egyptian Government is an excellent buffer between the Prime Minister and responsibility. If we temporarily took over the Government, we should be forced to do many things that are not now done, and undo much that is now going on. The other day the Prime Minister exclaimed, with exultation, that there was not a tittle of evidence in any Blue Book to show that Hicks Pasha had the right to claim the moral support of Her Majesty's Government. Now, I say that if there is no evidence in the Blue Books to show that Hicks Pasha had a right to the moral support of Her Majesty's Government, their policy stands condemned by that one fact alone; because, if he had had their moral support, all these disasters would have been avoided. The cost of this dual system of administration is such that every day makes it more and more difficult for us to reform the Administration of Egypt. I do not know whether the House is aware of it; but actually, at the present moment, the Egyptian Government are paying a sum which goes in diminution of the cost of troops on the English Establishment. I believe that fact was pointed out last year upon the Army Estimates. Not only are the Egyptian Government obliged to support English troops, but they are also paying the cost of what General Gordon with some irony calls "Wood's Invincibles," the only invincibility of which is their invincible objection to go into action. Making full allowance for the exaggeration of newspaper reports, I may point out that there were two telegrams received on two succeeding days, which give us a tolerable idea of that force. It was stated one day that all the English officers were prepared to send in their resignation, because they were not allowed to go on service, and the next day we were told that all the Natives, rank and file, were about to mutiny because they were going on service. I find in the Papers that there was a distinct warning sent to Her Majesty's Government by one of our most distinguished Consuls, who informed them that if they sent Egyptian and Turkish troops against the Arabs, they would be to a certainty defeated. Her Majesty's Government paid no attention to this warning, but thought they would be able to shield themselves behind this sham and imaginary Government. If, however, they were responsible for the Administration of Egypt, they should not have so shielded themselves. Let us put the matter in a common-sense point of view, and ask ourselves, is it possible to reform the Administration of a country whose finances are in permanent disorder? It will be absolutely impossible, so long as you have two sets of Administration and two Armies, to improve the financial condition of Egypt. Until the finances are placed in a satisfactory condition, it is idle to talk of effecting any satisfactory improvement. But there is something more grave still. I do not know whether hon. Members have read a remarkable telegram, which comes from Khartoum, and which appears in *The Times* of this morning. It has been sent by a gentleman who is our Consular Agent at Khartoum—a man who has gone at the risk of his life to assume his duties there, and therefore there is more importance to be attached to his statements than to those of an ordinary newspaper correspondent. He reports an interview which he has had with General Gordon; and, unless the whole of the telegram is an absolute forgery, he shows the existence of a state of things which it is absolutely essential that the Committee should seriously consider. General Gordon announces that it is essential that he should be succeeded as Governor by a man of the name of Zebehr Pasha. Now, we all know something about Zebehr Pasha. We know that he is the chief slave-driver. If Lord Beaconsfield had been in Office and had thought of employing such a person, the present Prime Minister would probably have designated him the "Legree" of the Soudan. General Gordon says—

> "As for Zebehr Pasha's blood-feud with me it is absurd; if a subsidy be granted him for three years dependent on my safety.. As for Zebehr's slave-dealing offences, they are bad, but not worse than those of Ismail and other Turks, for the thief is no worse than the receiver."

Now, General Gordon has absolute power, and yet his suggestion for the pacification of the Province is that he is to be succeeded by the man well known as the greatest slave-driver in the country; a man of so murderous a tendency that he could only be kept from murdering General Gordon by the receipt of a sum of money dependent upon that distinguished officer's safety. Is it right that this House should vote money which is to be expended in this way, when they are clearly told that one of the objects of Her Majesty's Government is to employ this man as an agent in extricating them from the political difficulties of the situation in which they are now placed? What does slave-driving or slave-hunting mean? It means wholesale destruction and murder, the sacking of villages, the killing of those who are unfit for slavery, and the sale and captivity of those who are. It means a perpetual repetition of atrocities similar to those which took place in Bulgaria, and promoted in this case for the sake of gain. The Prime Minister was good enough, when the late Government were in Office, to attempt to associate them with the atrocities in Bulgaria, and there was one sentence at the end of his remarkable pamphlet which I always recollect. He said—

> "There is not a cannibal in the South Sea Islands, not a criminal in Europe, whose blood does not boil at the recital of what has been done, and which remains unavenged;"

but nothing is now said about the atrocities of the Slave Trade. Are we to understand that when Lord Beaconsfield was in Office the blood of every criminal in Europe and of every cannibal in the South Sea Islands was to boil over at the recital of cruelties and atrocities which, when the present Prime Minister is in Office, are to receive approval from a majority of the Members of the House of Commons? There seems to me only one straightforward course for Her Majesty's Government, and that is clearly to accept their responsibility for the present position of affairs in Egypt. That would be far more manly, straightforward, and English than to attempt to delude the House by what I cannot help calling humbug and imposture. It is humbug and imposture to pretend that there is any Government in Egypt except that which is promoted by Her Majesty's Government. The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) the other day gave an answer which it seems to me was exactly the sort of answer which, in accordance with the policy of the Government, ought not to have been given; because, in reply to a Question as to the position occupied by Sir Evelyn Baring, he made this remarkable statement—

> "In matters of importance in which Sir Evelyn Baring thinks it necessary to give advice, it is expected that during our present armed occupation his advice will be followed."

I do not know what my noble Friend meant by that; but it is capable of this inference that—as soon as our armed occupation is over, his advice might not be followed. What follows if that be so? We intend, I suppose, to keep a Representative in Egypt after our occupation is over; but, if it is not intended that our advice should be received then, one of two things must happen—either we must perpetually occupy the country, or withdraw our Representative when we cease to occupy it. Answers such as these, I believe, do much harm in the state of uncertainty which now prevails, and accelerate the very evils you wish to avert. In urging Her Majesty's Government to pursue a manly and straightforward course by taking over temporarily the Government of Egypt, I do not for one moment advocate annexation. I think no one could have been, even for a short time, connected with the Administration of India without being aware of the heavy strain upon English resources and English funds caused by the acquisition of a great territory in which Europeans cannot permanently reside. We are alone able to govern that country by annually sending out a large number of civilians and soldiers for the purpose of supplying the place of those who die or who are sick owing to the unhealthy character of the climate. Therefore, I confess I should be very reluctant, unless it was absolutely essential, for this country to annex any great extent of territory which might have to be governed in the same way. But I recollect, when I was at the India Office, that I frequently had the advantage of talking to one of the most distinguished Indian civilians who ever lived, Sir George Clerk, who had been many years in the Service, and who was able to talk of those who were living some 50 years back. Sir George Clerk was, perhaps, one of the best friends the Natives ever had in the Indian Civil Service; and although his aversion to annexation or even to the temporary assumption of the annexation of a country was very strong, he told me that there was only one thing to be remembered in taking over the administration of the country—namely, that it was the only means of breaking up the incapable and corrupt ring of officials who would intrigue and check all efforts at reform. You may appoint excellent officials, but their efforts will be frustrated by intrigue; but the moment you take over the Government of a country, you can deport or otherwise punish this gang of obstructives as you choose. In the case of Egypt our efforts have been checked by a small ring of Turkish or Circassian officials, and we shall never be able to do anything with them until we become directly responsible for the administration of the country. To this the Prime Minister puts forward two objections. The first is, that it would make the Khedive a puppet. Well, Sir, will anyone dispute that he is not one already? Would the Government dare to leave him and his Ministers for a month to face the consequences of their own acts? If they did, the Khedive and his Ministers would speedily be thrown, bag and baggage, out of the country. The next objection of the Prime Minister is that it would be contrary to the public law of Europe. The late Lord Beaconsfield once remarked that all persons were subject, however eminent, to moments of riotous hallucination, and one of these hallucinations on the part of the Prime Minister is that he is the sole repository and exponent of the public law of Europe. Although the right hon. Gentleman made an indictment against the late Government in the interests of foreign countries, he never received one particle of endorsement from the accredited Representative of any Foreign Power in Europe. If a regard for the public law of Europe prevented the Prime Minister from taking the course suggested, what does he think of the remarkable Proclamation issued a few days ago by General Graham and Admiral Hewett, from which I will read one or two sentences? The Proclamation says—

> "The great God who rules the Universe does not send such scoundrels as Osman Digna as his messengers. Your people are brave, and England always respects such men. Awake,

then; chase Osman Digna from your country. We promise you that protection and pardon shall be granted to all who come in at once; otherwise the fate of those who fell at El Teb shall surely overtake you."

Will the Prime Minister say that that Proclamation was issued in accordance with the public law of Europe? Will any Member of the Government say that it was issued in accordance with the public law of Europe? [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes.] The right hon. Gentleman opposite is a very able man, but I am curious to hear the arguments by which he can support that contention. It does seem to me to be trifling with the House for the Prime Minister to get up and drag in the public law of Europe—that public law for which he has so extreme a reverence—when a few days before he had given his sanction to a Proclamation which he perfectly well knew was in the very teeth of that public law. Then the Prime Minister has said that it is a serious source of danger to put Christians in places of trust over Mahomedan races. My hon. Friend the Member for South Lincolnshire (Mr. Finch-Hatton), in his very remarkable speech, on which I hope I may be allowed to congratulate him, because it was characterized by the spontaneous debating power and facility of expression which I think are always eagerly welcomed by all sections of this House—pointed out that we are the Rulers of more Mahomedans than the Sovereign of any other country. I greatly question the propriety of a Minister of the Empress of India asserting that it is a serious source of danger to put Christians in places of trust over Mahomedans. Does the Prime Minister believe in that assertion, or is it a mere debating assertion? Who now is the Prime Minister of Egypt? It is Nubar Pasha, who is at the head of three great Departments of the State. The Prime Minister may say that the races who inhabit Lower Egypt are not fanatical; but he must admit that the most fanatical Mahomedans who are to be found reside in the neighbourhood of the Soudan. Yet what is the measure of the Prime Minister for the pacification of the Soudan? He has selected General Gordon, a genuine hero, but who is probably one of the most fanatical Christians to be found in Europe, and he has put up General Gordon in a post of absolute authority over the most fanatical Mahomedans that can be found, and he is so satisfied with the result that he declines to inform the House of the proceedings of General Gordon. Then, I say that the Government must find some better reason and advance some better objections. It is a serious thing to be asked to vote money, or to sanction an expedition, when those who make the request cannot tell us for what objects they want it. We are now incurring loss of life and a large expenditure of money; trade and commerce have been dislocated; social relations are unsettled, and all for what? Merely in order that a certain number of Turks and Circassians may, for the edification of Her Majesty's Government, attempt to play the part of responsible Ministers at Cairo. Every English official, from Lord Dufferin downwards, has warned the Government that these men are incapable of performing the duties assigned to them; but Her Majesty's Government proceed to invest these men with virtuous qualities and attributes which everybody but themselves know they do not possess. That is the pantomime which has been going on for the last eight months; but what is the cost of your pantomime? You have destroyed three Egyptian Armies; you have deplenished the Egyptian Treasury; and now the English taxpayer is asked to step in and make up the deficiency. I say that it is time this cruel, costly, and murderous farce should be brought to an end. The Prime Minister, in a voice of thunder, on Thursday last, told us it never could be. The right hon. Gentleman occupies a unique position; but if he keeps to the word "never," somebody else must be put into his place who will substitute the two words "at once." Sooner or later Her Majesty's Government must make themselves directly responsible for the administration of Egypt. The longer they delay it, the more difficult it will become, and they will not gain a single friend and not conciliate a single enemy by their delay. What are Her Majesty's Government afraid of? Not of the public law of Europe, which they have already broken, or of setting Christians over Mahomedans, which they have already done. If that be their ground, they may re-assure themselves. This Parliament is in its fifth year, and I have noticed that the first instinct of all moribund majorities is self-preservation. It is tolerably certain, therefore, that nothing will induce hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they can help it, to put Her Majesty's Government in such a minority as to force on a Dissolution, which might put an end to the political career of so many of them. I thank the Committee for the attention with which they have listened to me. Sooner or later I am certain the Government will have to harden their hearts and do that which we advocate. There are, however, two excuses which Her Majesty's Government cannot make for their past misconduct; they cannot pretend that they have inherited their difficulties from the late Government, or that they have failed owing to the want of Parliamentary support. The Prime Minister's majority is greater, his expenditure higher, and the lost of life he has caused is heavier, than I believe has occurred in almost any other period in the history of the country; and the more money we spend, and the more life we take, the further off we are in getting even an intelligible excuse from Her Majesty's Government for the havoc they are occasioning. Thirty years ago the Prime Minister was a Member of a distinguished Government which landed us in the Crimean War, and which was denounced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) as "a guilty and incapable Administration." Are not those words applicable to Her Majesty's Government now? If they cannot shake off their responsibility, at least they can retrace their steps. They have been compelled to do so in Central Asia, and they may be made to do so in this case. Can any of them suppose that they would lose anything in the public estimation by frankly admitting that they have been wrong in the past? I ask Her Majesty's Government, for another reason, to state plainly their intentions. They regret very much what they are pleased to call the waste of time. Yet more time will be wasted, until we get a clear and definite expression of opinion from Her Majesty's Government as to what their ultimate policy in Egypt is to be. Therefore, I would implore Her Majesty's Government to take this opportunity of allaying that apprehension, suspicion, and anxiety which in the latter phases of this Egyptian muddle has made our position in that country at once as ridiculous as it is deplorable.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not intend to occupy the attention of the Committee for any length of time. I have already expressed my views on the question of our policy in Egypt generally, and I can only say that I remain of the same opinion. I think our best chance—in fact, our only chance—of being able to fulfil our promises in Egypt is to be found in realizing the facts of our occupation and responsibility. In one respect I differ from the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton). I think that in his powerful, and what I may call controversial speech, he has lost sight of the circumstance that, although not, perhaps, in accordance with the intention and wish of the Government, we are, nevertheless, in reality realizing the facts of our position in Egypt more and more every day. We are obliged to realize them. The noble Lord states that the Prime Minister very much deprecates the idea of the military, political, and financial affairs of Egypt being conducted by English officials. But what are the facts? There is a remarkable instance in to-day's papers. The Secretary of the Interior, Sabet Pasha, has differed from his English subordinate, and, of course, he is at once dismissed. Now, I do not blame the Government for this action. I thoroughly approve of it; but I think this ought, to some extent, to be a comfort to the noble Lord. The logic of circumstances has been too strong even for the strong will of the Prime Minister himself, or the wonderful resources of his argument. It is to my mind so clear, that I shall make no further remark about it, as I do not wish to weary the House. The only remark I want to make is upon another and a very important question which has come into prominence within the last day or two; and that is in regard to what is happening in a portion of Egypt or the Soudan. I am not now talking of the Western Soudan, of Kordofan or Darfour, or of Suakin, but of Khartoum, a most important point geographically, and, indeed, one of the most important positions in the world. It does appear to me that, as regards this part of the Soudan, Her Majesty's Government have not yet lost their initiative. I do not think they will be able to keep it long unless they make use of it; but for the time they have the option of taking several courses. If they adopt the drifting policy the current will quickly carry them with it; but at present it is possible for them to adopt one of two or three alternatives. There is especially one alternative, and I trust the Committee will allow me to say that to that alternative, at least, there are very strong objections. It is impossible to ignore the rumour which is current that General Gordon is to be replaced by Zebehr Pasha. It is in everybody's mouth. I do not go so far as the noble Lord. I do not imagine that the Government have made up their minds to use Zebehr Pasha as their agent. I have no reason to believe that; but I do own that the course suggested by General Gordon is one of the alternatives in these great difficulties. The Prime Minister, in reply to a Question last Friday, did not deny the truth of the rumour. He merely said that the Government had come to no decision. Allow me to say why I trust this may still be true, and that, if the Government have this course yet under consideration, and do come to the opinion that it ought to be followed, they will not commit the House and the country to it without telling us the reasons why they have formed such opinion, and giving us an opportunity of forming and expressing our opinion. I confess that I do not think this is an unreasonable request, for really it is impossible to imagine a course which, at first sight, at the first blush, would be more contrary to all the traditions and all the antecedents of our policy with regard to the African races, and especially in regard to the Slave Trade. It would be a new departure, more complete than anything else. Who is this Zebehr Pasha? He is undoubtedly a strong man; but he is also chief of the slave traders. He is a man who has obtained great power and enormous wealth by means of the Slave Trade. He is not only a very large slave-owner; he is very different from that. He has been the principal instigator of the horrible slave hunts. He was the chief organizer of that caravan traffic which was marked across the desert by the skulls of dead men, women, and children—a traffic accompanied by even greater horrors and atrocities than the old Western "Middle Passage" to America. General Gordon knew him very well. He had a long contest with him, and in no part of his life did he show his wonderful power to greater advantage. He finally succeeded in defeating him, and his lieutenant found it necessary to put Zebehr's son to death. What did General Gordon say in 1879 of Zebehr? I am not going to weary the House with long extracts; but there is one short one I should like to quote. What does General Gordon say at page 337 of that most interesting book entitled *General Gordon in Central Asia*, published in 1879, of Zebehr Pasha? He says—

> "That it was he (Zebehr) who devastated the whole country, and that he alone is responsible for the Slave Trade of the last ten years."

What was that Slave Trade? I find this passage at page 343, under the date March 31, 1879—

> "This evening a party of seven men, slave dealers, with 23 slaves, were captured, and were brought to me, together with two camels. Nothing could exceed the misery of these poor wretches—some were children of not more than three years old; they had come across that torrid zone from Shaka, a journey from which I and my camel shrink."

Let me give another extract from the instructions sent to General Gordon by Lord Granville. They are the main instructions on which he is now acting—

> "You are also desired to consider and report upon the best mode of effecting the evacuation of the interior of the Soudan, and upon the manner in which the safety and the good administration by the Egyptian Government of the ports on the sea coast can best be secured. In connection with this subject, you should pay especial consideration to the question of the steps that may usefully be taken to counteract the stimulus which it is feared may possibly be given to the Slave Trade by the present insurrectionary movement, and by the withdrawal of the Egyptian authority from the interior."—[Egypt, No. 2 (1884), p. 3.]

We must not forget that these are the instructions to General Gordon, and very proper instructions they are. Therefore, if General Gordon has given us this advice, I must confess that I am not prepared blindly to follow even him without knowing the grounds on which he is acting. Pray do not suppose I disparage the qualities of this wonderful man. I know no man like him. I go further than that; I believe him to be a hero. As a personal administrator, he has the intuitions of genius. He is utterly regardless of all selfish coniderations. He despises money. He ares nothing for fame, he cares nothing or pleasure, for life, or for death. He seems to have no temptations. Perhaps he may have one temptation. If you will read his striking journals and letters you will feel—I do not know why—that, perhaps, he is weary of life. ["No, no!"] Well, he says so; and I confess it sometimes occurs to me that it would be the greatest possible delight to him to be a martyr. Undoubtedly, he is a deeply religious man. In this world, God's guidance and government are to him the strongest and greatest realities of life; and so we find this—that while personally one of the humblest of men, thinking nothing of his own faculties, he has the power of unlimited self-confidence in himself, because he believes himself to be God's instrument. He has wonderful resources in action. He gets out of difficulties in a way no other man could. No wonder that, with all these qualities, these savages look on him not as a man, but as a demi-god. If he really advises this action, I think we are bound to consider it; but we cannot, as I say, blindly follow his advice. There is one simple reason why I am not inclined to do this, and it is this. I have more confidence in what General Gordon does himself than in what he recommends others to do. I have so much confidence in his personal action that, although I confess I was staggered by the notorious Slave Proclamation, which must, I fear, be taken to deal with slave dealing as well as with slave holding, and although I cannot but regret that it was issued, I am not going to blame General Gordon for that Proclamation until I know the grounds on which it was issued. And for these two reasons. First, I know the wonderful administrative ability of the man; and, secondly, because I know how he hates the Slave Trade, and I only state the simple truth when I say that he would gladly lay down his life to stop it. But this confidence, I confess, is in Gordon's personality—in what he would do himself—but not in what he instructs others to do, when he is not by their side to influence or control them. Remember what must be the necessary consequences if such a man as Zebehr is to assume the place of General Gordon. First of all, Gordon would be gone. All his wonderful influence would be gone with him—the influence of his personality, of his courage, of his unselfishness, of his enthusiasm—all that would be gone with him. His daring and his ability would no longer be feared, and his devotedness and power to help would no longer be there to be almost worshipped. If Gordon could remain, I confess that I should look on the future of the Soudan with great confidence. I believe he would do great work in a short time at little cost to Egypt, with less loss of life than by any other means; that he would establish a beneficent Government; and that he would strike a blow against slavery such as has never been struck before. But that is not what we have before us. I do not know whether the Government have ever asked him if he would remain. I should like the Government to say whether he has ever been asked to remain. What we have to deal with is different; it is not with Gordon as Governor of Khartoum, but with Zebehr Pasha in his place. Do not let the Government suppose that they will get rid of responsibility simply by placing Zebehr in Gordon's place. We cannot let him alone; we cannot let that man, with his cruelties and his slave trading, alone if we put him there. If General Gordon puts him there, the Government have rightly stated that they are responsible for what General Gordon does, as long as they do not disavow him. But if they allow this man to be put there, they will be responsible for the impetus he will, in all probability, give to the Slave Trade, and for the cruelties which will be revived under his rule. Remember where you would put him. You would put him in a place where he would be more likely to do harm than in any other place in the world. Khartoum is a remarkable place, in a wonderful position. Besides being the emporium of commerce, it is the great mart of the Slave Trade. It is the high road to the Red Sea, where an outlet is found for the slaves, and it is at the junction of the two branches of the Nile, to which the slaves are easily brought down and floated in vast cargoes of men, women, and children, and thence sent to Lower Egypt. I do not know whether the Government contemplate this course; but I think it is time we should know if they do contemplate it or not. It is most necessary to see that they do not commit the House and the country without giving us an opportunity of forming and expressing our opinion upon it. To put this man Zebehr, the chief of the slave traders, at the head of the Government, would, indeed, be a remarkable result of our occupation of Egypt, and a remarkable fulfilment of the excellent instructions of Lord Granville to General Gordon, that he was to do all that he could to prevent any impulse being given to the Slave Trade. There may be an explanation, but we ought to be in a position to judge before any action is taken. There are only two more remarks with which I will trouble the House. We cannot be perfectly sure that, in recommending Zebehr Pasha's appointment, General Gordon may not change his mind, for he has already changed his mind in another instance, as a Memorandum received from him when he got to Egypt shows, with regard to the restoration of the small Sultans in the Soudan. He says—

> "My idea is that the restoration of the country should be made to the different petty Sultans who existed at the time of Mehemet Ali's conquest, and whose families still exist; that the Mahdi should be left altogether out of the calculation as regards the handing over of the country."—[Egypt, No. 7 (1884), p. 2.]

He has found it necessary, for a good reason, I dare say, to change that opinion. He has authorized the Mahdi to become the Ruler of Kordofan. I do not blame him. His difficulties are far beyond anything we can imagine or comprehend here. But he may be recommending not what he would do himself, but what others would do, and not such a course as might be the final conclusion of his own judgment. I do not think that the House of Commons, or the vast majority of the people of this country, would regard the appointment by Her Majesty's Government of this slave trader consistent with the traditional policy of this country with respect to the African races, and with respect to the Slave Trade. For generations we have been the champions of the slave in every part of the world, and one of our boasted historical traditions has been that we have never ceased for many years to do what we could to stop this terrible evil. We have pressed upon and persuaded other countries to follow our example in this respect, and sometimes they have suspected our motives. I am sure, however, we shall in this matter lose much of our moral power with other nations if we pursue this policy with regard to the Slave Trade. I need only give one example—that of the Congo. What we desire there is, that there should be no possibility of a re-opening of the Slave Trade; but we shall certainly lose our power of argument with the Portuguese with regard to slaves on the Congo if we take the course I have mentioned, unless we can give them reasons based on arguments far more overpowering than any that can be drawn from our own recent policy in Egypt, and the arguments that have been adduced in its support in this House.

SIR GEORGE ELLIOT said, it was with great reluctance that he rose to trouble the Committee; but he could not refrain from making a few observations upon the subject of Egypt. He had, on one or two occasions, risen in the House rather to sympathize with the Government in the difficulties in in which they were placed in Egypt than to condemn their policy. Recent transactions, however, clearly showed that the difficulties connected with the administration of the affairs of Egypt were getting worse and worse. Having had the opportunity of witnessing the course of affairs in Egypt, he could not help thinking that the evils surrounding the situation had grown from bad to worse as a result of the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government. The Egyptian story was a very sad one. In the first place, there was the difficulty with regard to the concert of Europe, and then there was the bombardment of Alexandria. That was followed up by the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, which was the principal feature of a very serious and terrible expedition. The cost of the expedition, both in loss of life and money to Egypt, as well as to our own country, was very great; it was very embarrassing to Egypt, and very discouraging and disheartening to us at home. And now the country was experiencing the evil of the undefined responsibility of Her Majesty's Government. He certainly believed that the Government were desirous, according to the light which they were possessed of, and which, perhaps, was greater than his, or greater than that of anybody else in the

House, because they were in possession of all the facts, of doing what was right and proper; but it was very strange to him that they did not realize more thoroughly and more fully the great responsibility which attached to the position they occupied. In his opinion, if the Prime Minister and his Cabinet were to make it known that for a certain period —he did not suggest a very long period —they would stay in Egypt, and put the administration of the country upon a thoroughly sound footing, they would do a great deal to lessen their own responsibility, and to add to the material well-being of Egypt itself. Seeing that the affairs of Egypt had now got into such an embarrassed, confused, and chaotic state, and having regard to the welfare of the county, he did not believe that Europe, or the world, would find fault with Her Majesty's Government if they took up the bold position he recommended, because they had already incurred great responsibility in the eyes of Europe in the part they had taken up to the present time. If we were justified in going to war to maintain our rights over the Suez Canal, and to protect the interests of our commerce passing through that great highway to India, he could not understand, as he had previously said in his place in Parliament—and he had some knowledge of the situation of Egypt—how we could maintain the independence of our communications with India, unless we had the control of Lower Egypt. Why did we fight for the Canal? Because the safety of that great waterway was indispensable to the interests of this country; and, to his mind, it was impossible for anyone to have that control over the Suez Canal which was necessary to provide for its safety, unless they were in possession of the littoral of the Red Sea. He did not wish to embarrass Her Majesty's Government, or to pass Votes of Censure upon them; but he desired to urge upon them the importance of taking decisive steps in order to assume a responsibility which had been practically avowed, and which, if taken promptly and boldly, would immediately lessen the difficulties of the situation.

Mr. LAING said, he trusted the Committee would allow him to say a few words upon this Egyptian Question, in which his connection in India led him to take considerable interest. He felt that the policy which had been put forward by one or two hon. Members below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House was one which would be fatal to the interests of their Indian Empire. He felt, also, as an independent Liberal, that it would be no less fatal to the interests of his Party, if it sympathized in any degree with the policy which had found expression from one or two mouths below the Gangway. What was the theory of that policy? Why, that our presence in Egypt was a crime and calamity; a crime, because we were putting pressure on a nation struggling for its independence; and a calamity, because it was involving us in still larger responsibilities, when those of our extensive Empire were heavier than we could bear. The practical conclusion they drew from those premises was a very logical one; it was, that we ought to be ashamed to find ourselves in Egypt; that we ought to apologize for our presence; and that we ought to get out of the country as quickly as we could. That policy was now known as the policy of "Rescue and retire." He maintained that that policy was not approved by the majority of the country, or by the majority of the House, or indeed, by the majority of the Liberal Party. "Rescue and remain" would more happily describe the policy which met with most favour in the House and in the country. "Rescue and retire" might be applied to the outlying parts of the Soudan, the parts which it was impossible for us to maintain under our control; but as regarded Egypt Proper, and possibly as regarded the ports of the Red Sea and Khartoum, that was not a policy which the country would approve of. It was perfectly evident that the Government had lost—nobody could deny it—a great part of their popularity and *prestige* through the events in Egypt during the last six or eight months. It was not because they had come to act resolutely, but because they were not resolute sooner, and because they did not go much farther many months ago. The majority obtained on the Vote of Censure was a very respectable one; but no one for a moment supposed that it expressed the opinion of a majority of the House of Commons. It was a majority obtained, not in favour of that irresolute policy and shirking of responsibility which had led to the disasters in the Soudan; it was obtained partly by what no man need be ashamed to confess—namely, loyalty to his Party, and general confidence in the present Government, apart from Egyptian questions; and partly owing to the feeling that the Government had, at last, begun to recognize the gravity of the situation. The despatch of the 5th of January, shattering of the Egyptian Government, was, in fact, the turning over of a new leaf; the sending of General Gordon to the Soudan, and the despatch of a force to Suakin, with instructions to fight the battle of Teb, were indications of a more resolute course of action. And, again, what weighed very greatly with a number of Liberal Members in the House was the fact that hon. Members opposite did not announce a policy of their own. They felt, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had very happily said—that they ought not to give a blank cheque to Gentlemen who would not announce a policy. The only hon. Member opposite who did venture to formulate a policy was the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill); and even his policy was so overlaid with explosive epigrams and abusive epithets that the House did not know whether to treat it seriously or not. He (Mr. Laing) was not at all certain that, if the noble Lord could succeed in putting the Government in a minority by catching the votes of a few Liberal Members, he would not have turned round and advocated the immediate evacuation of Egypt, and the recall of Arabi. These were the reasons, undoubtedly, which led to the majority upon the Vote of Censure a few nights ago. A much better test of the real opinion of the House was obtained the other evening when the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) moved the adjournment of the House in order to censure the Government for having allowed a military force to go to Suakin, and to fight the battle of El Teb. On that occasion, if hon. Members opposite had not, for some reason best known to themselves, got up to support the Motion for Adjournment, and afterwards voted with him, the hon. Baronet and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) would have found themselves in the remarkable position of being two Tellers without anyone to tell. That showed to his (Mr. Laing's) mind the weakness of the Peace-at-any-price Party. He was sorry, however, to say that the language repeatedly used by the Prime Minister seemed, in some degree, calculated to support the views of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle. The Prime Minister, as well as the hon. Member for Carlisle, was constantly saying that our presence in Egypt was a great misfortune—a misfortune which he (Mr. Gladstone) apologized for as being due to diplomatic entanglements in which he had been involved by the fault of the late Conservative Government. The right hon. Gentleman never missed an opportunity of proclaiming to the House his anxiety to retire from Egypt, and used language which he (Mr. Laing) was afraid came perilously near that of some of the hon. Members below the Gangway—groaning under the responsibilities of an Empire of 300,000,000 of people, wishing we could contract and turn our great Empire into a second-rate State, and anxious that we should retire behind the "silver streak," which he would make the boundary of the Kingdom. ["Oh!"] He did not mean for a moment to impute such deliberate opinions to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; but he did say the right hon. Gentleman had used language quite recently, in debates in the House of Commons, which produced such an impression out-of-doors, and which did a vast deal of mischief. It was the holding of such language that was the main cause of that loss of *prestige* and popularity which had been sustained by what was, a few months ago, the strongest Ministry this country had ever known. Why were we in Egypt? Was it true we were in Egypt only by the misfortune of diplomatic entanglements produced by the Predecessors of the present Government? No; decidedly not. It was not true. It was true that the late Government made engagements, with regard to the Law of Liquidation and the Dual Control, which were very unwise and embarrassing; but they made them with very good motives towards France. France was a party to the Dual Control in the interest of her own bondholders, and we followed suit. The establishment of the Dual Control, however, was not the real reason why we now found ourselves in Egypt. We were driven there by the inevitable force of circumstances. As long as we had an Indian Empire we could not afford to have Egypt — the half-way house between India and England—either dominated by the influence of any Foreign Power adverse to our own, nor could we afford to see Egypt fall into a state of anarchy and confusion, and dominated by military adventurers. That was the urgent motive which took us to Egypt. The immediate cause of our presence there was not so much diplomatic entanglement, but the massacre which occurred at Alexandria. And here he might observe that hon. Gentlemen who talked about our expedition to Egypt, and the bombardment of Alexandria, as if they were national crimes, always conveniently put out of sight the occurrences which immediately preceded them — namely, the massacres at Alexandria. If foreigners murdered and massacred English subjects, the Peace-at-any-price Party regarded it as an incident worthy of no special notice; but if the English proceeded to revenge the massacres, and to teach barbarous races that they could not kill Englishmen with impunity, the Peace-at-any-price Party ransacked the dictionary to find language to express their indignation at such blood-guiltiness. He (Mr. Laing) distinctly affirmed that we could not, if we wished to retain our Indian Empire, afford to have it proclaimed to the whole world that any military adventurer who could get a few thousand Native troops to mutiny could set up his own authority, and either encourage directly, or connive at, massacres of English subjects by a fanatical mob like that at Alexandria. If we were going to tolerate that state of things, we had better give up India at once. There was not the least doubt that the safety of our Indian Empire was the main cause of our present responsibilities and anxieties. If we had no Indian Empire, what need we care whether the French were at Cairo, or the Russians at Constantinople? Why need we trouble our heads about the movements of Russia in Central Asia? If we were content to retire behind the "silver streak," we should, no doubt, save ourselves a great deal of expense and anxiety and trouble, and we should be able to attend to domestic affairs; we might, as a second-rate State, be secure for a generation or two, if we trusted to the jealousy and rivalry between Continental Powers continuing. But did we not feel that our great Indian Empire was one of which we had the greatest reason to be proud? India was now enjoying peace and tranquillity such as she had never enjoyed for centuries. England was gradually educating the Natives up to the point that in future generations they might be able to share in their own government. Were we now going to throw all our efforts away, either through the selfish fear of taking the responsibility which belonged to us, or because of over-scrupulousness in not being able, in case of necessity, to maintain by the sword an Empire which was made by the sword? The history of India showed very clearly the contrast between a decided line of policy which he advocated, and the line of policy which had been adopted with regard to Egypt. The case of the Punjaub was as near a parallel to that of Egypt as could be found. There was a rising of the soldiery which endangered our Indian Empire; but it was suppressed. After the victory of Goojerat, did we say—"Our responsibilities are too great; we will not cross the Indus?" Suppose such language had been held, what would have been the state of India in the Mutiny? It was our resolute action in annexing the Punjaub which had proved our sheet anchor. The instance of the Punjaub was another proof of the fallacy of the contention, in which he was sorry to hear the Prime Minister indulge, that annexation was unpopular in India; that the Indians preferred a Native Government. Why, anyone who had the least practical acquaintance with the state of things in India must know that exactly the opposite was true. Those Provinces which were the most loyal, and most contented, and most prosperous, were those which had been annexed to the British Empire within recent time. Everyone knew that the Punjaub and Scinde were the most loyal Provinces in India, and they were Provinces in which the National Government had been suppressed, and in which direct and immediate British rule had been established. Let us compare the case of the Punjaub with the case of Cashmere, which was left under Native Government. It was not true that the Natives were better off under Native government. On the contrary, they were infinitely better under British rule. The Native population only began to grumble and to become discontented when they had been under British rule for generations, and had forgotten the state of things which existed under the old Native Government. He could not pretend to say what difficulties might arise in the case of the actual annexation of Egypt; but he ventured to say that, if they could look only at the interests of humanity, and at the benefit to the Native population, annexation would be the best thing that could happen. Again, what did history teach them as to Egyptian nationality? Why, there had been no National Government in Egypt since the days of the Pharoahs—since the conquest of Cambyses! They had had since then the rule of the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Circassians, the Mamelukes, and, finally, the Albanians. But as to the mass of the population, they had been under the kourbash of taskmasters from the time of the Pyramids down to the present day. The only thing approaching to an aristocracy in Egypt were the descendants of the Turks, the Mamelukes, and the Circassians, and in saying that he spoke of the military aristocracy. The commercial class was composed of foreigners — English, French, and Italians. And when they came to the smaller class of traders, they found it composed of Maltese, Greeks, and those miscellaneous races included in the term Levantine. Those were the elements out of which they thought they could make a Constitutional Government, and then wash their hands of all responsibility. Well, there never was a wilder theory. The Egyptians would never be a nation, unless for generations we, or some other Power, took them in hand; gave them just and equal laws; educated the fellahs, who were by no means deficient in natural intelligence, and did everything for them as we had done for the ryots of Bengal—educate them up to a point at which they could be employed in the administration of their country, and could be allowed some degree of self-government. If that were not done, what would become of Egypt, if we followed up the present aspirations for an early withdrawal? Why, Egypt must fall back into a worse position than she was in before. She was not in a condition for self-government. If we were to withdraw, Egypt would become an arena for the contentions of the diplomatic Representatives of all the nations of Europe, and such a withdrawal would probably lead to an European war. Practically, it might be said—"If we step out, France steps in." If we had an Indian Empire, France had a North African Empire, and she could not tolerate any rule in Egypt which would make it a centre of Mahomedan propaganda. He maintained that we had gone to Egypt in accordance with the most righteous of all laws—the law of necessity. It was a most fortunate combination of circumstances that when it became necessary for some Power to step in there and assert the cause of civilization and Christianity, and to restore order, England was the only Power to do it. This was a task of difficulty and danger, no doubt; but he believed that we should be able, single-handed, to carry it to the end. It was one of the first international rules that Treaties expired with a state of war. Why should Treaties, entered into long before the commencement of hostilities, be maintained by us, when the whole burden and the heat of war was thrown upon ourselves? Our Treaty with France expired the moment that the French Admiral steamed out of the harbour at Alexandria. When that event took place, we had, so to speak, a clear sheet of paper in our hands. We should take our own course in this matter, and, having undertaken our task in Egypt, we should go on with it. One word on the finances of Egypt; and here he would just advert to what might be thrown out against him for making these remarks—namely, that he was speaking in the interest of the bondholders. He was doing no such thing. He would say at once that, in his opinion, the one point of all others on which resolute action by the English Government was required was that of finance. He thought the Law of Liquidation was an iniquitous law; he looked upon it as a law made in the interest of the bondholders against the taxpayers of Egypt. He thought that that law should be modified, and that a heavy income tax should be imposed on those who derived benefit from the public funds of

Egypt. Certainly, he could not be accused of speaking in the interest of the bondholders when he said that the finances of Egypt required to be taken in hand in order to place them on a sound foundation. If it were true, as he believed it to be, that good government meant good finance in all countries, it was especially true in the case of Eastern countries. Let the agricultural class in Egypt pay only that moderate rent which was in this country paid to the landowners, and then there would be a fair surplus of income for carrying out the work of the Government; and, upon those conditions, they might secure in Egypt a prosperous state of things, and make the people fairly happy and contented. But as long as the present uncertainty lasted it was impossible to have good finance. Everything was paralyzed. Who was going to rebuild the houses at Alexandria, which had been burned down, when no one knew whether in six months or six years we were going to retire from Egypt? There would not be the least difficulty in our way if what he had pointed out were taken in hand resolutely. Those dangers with which the Prime Minister tried to terrify them when he spoke of the extent of our responsibilities, and the difficulty of a Christian Power governing a Mahomedan population, were partly true, but to a very great extent untrue. They were true, no doubt, as applied to the Southern Soudan, but untrue as a general proposition, or as applicable to Egypt Proper. It was difficult to govern any Eastern population, especially Mahomedan populations, where the race was turbulent and warlike; and it would be most difficult in a country naturally strong and intersected by mountain ranges. The attempt to occupy Afghanistan, or the Southern Soudan, if it were not absolutely impossible, would be well-nigh impossible, even if we were to strain our resources to the utmost. On the other hand, the physical geography of Egypt made it singularly easy to occupy that country, and two or three garrisons along the Valley of the Nile would be sufficient to keep it in perfect order. He held that it would be infinitely easier to keep Egypt in order than it was to keep the Punjaub in order, because, in the former, they had a quiet and pacific race, singularly unwarlike, as recent experience had shown. The inhabitants were the remains of a population which, as he had said, had crouched under the lash of the taskmaster; and, if there were any truth in Darwinian theories, the characteristics he had mentioned must be expected to continue in a race which had been in that state for 4,000 years. Turning again to the question of national finance, Egypt was not like a poor country which could never pay its expenses; it was a country singularly fertile in resources, and nothing was wanted there but to put things right at the beginning, and then agriculture and trade would extend and the Revenue increase. He ventured to say that if Sir Evelyn Baring, who understood the finances of India, received the full confidence and support of the Government for three years or less, he would leave those finances in a most satisfactory condition—a condition which would support a proper Army of Occupation, and, at the same time, decrease the amount of taxation on the mass of the population. There could be no doubt as to what we ought to do in the case of Egypt, and he was glad to be able to look upon the present policy of Her Majesty's Government as much more satisfactory than it had formerly been. With regard to the Estimate before the Committee, they were called upon to reject the Vote at the next Division. But he supposed hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their hearts, really approved of the Expedition to Suakin and of the battle at El Teb quite as much as did hon. Members on that side of the House. Well, those operations had been carried into effect, and they had to be paid for; and it would be simply childish to object now to the cost, merely because hon. Members were dissatisfied with the tone of the Prime Minister's speeches. He had nothing more to add, except to say that, in speaking as he had done of the Prime Minister and the tendency of some of his speeches, he did not wish it to be supposed that he was saying one word in derogation of the high character of the right hon. Gentleman. His (Mr. Laing's) present opinion did not prevent him thinking that the right hon. Gentleman and Sir Robert Peel would go down to posterity as men who were in their time the two greatest Home Ministers that the country had ever seen; but it was of vital necessity for the country at the present time to have a good Foreign Ministers. And when he said that he meant that the present crisis ought to be met in the spirit of a Chatham or of a Dalhousie; and, if that were so, the result could not be otherwise than satisfactory. That he believed to be the universal sentiment of the country, and he entirely disputed the right of one or two hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to speak for the Liberal Party, or even for the Radical section of that Party, in this matter. His own belief was that the nearer they approached the genuine working classes of the country, the more it would be found that they were thoroughly determined, happen what might, that they would never hand down this great Empire to their sons less great and less glorious than they received it from their fathers.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he rose to say a few words upon this very important question. It was not his intention to oppose in any way the Supplementary Vote then before the Committee; indeed, he would have supported a much larger Estimate for military operations, the only complaint on his part being that they had been undertaken too late to prevent that great sacrifice of life which had occurred in consequence of delay. During his absence abroad, he had had the advantage of hearing the opinion of foreigners, and of ascertaining the views of the Continental Press upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government. In the first place, foreigners were astonished at the vacillating and incomprehensible policy that had been announced by Her Majesty's Government. They could not comprehend their policy, and it was impossible to take up a newspaper abroad, or to enter into conversation with any foreigner of intelligence, without being met by expressions of astonishment at the course Her Majesty's Government were pursuing with regard to Egypt. He found that foreigners likened the Prime Minister to the Egyptian Sphinx, with this difference — that whereas the Sphinx, when her riddle was interpreted, destroyed herself, the right hon. Gentleman, even if he were disposed to follow her example, might be assured of a long life, because it would be a very long time before his secret was discovered. With regard to the Proclamation of General Gordon to the people of the Soudan, it was all very well for *The Times* and other authorities to say that the last clause of that Proclamation clearly related to domestic slavery, and guided all the others; but any man in his senses who read the document must have come to the conclusion that it was the general traffic in slaves, and not merely domestic slavery, that was signified by the Proclamation. Hon. Members knew that when General Gordon took office and started upon his Egyptian expedition, it was upon the condition that he should take no orders from the Khedive; that he was positively and solely the servant of the English Government, and that they alone were responsible. Hon. Members on those Benches were, therefore, justified in their opinion that the Proclamation of General Gordon was directly sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, and that it was in direct contravention to all former historical precedents on which we prided ourselves so much. And there, again, foreigners expressed their astonishment that we, who had been the champions of freedom, and who had spent millions and sacrificed so much in putting down the Slave Trade, should now go back upon ourselves and sanction what we had constantly and universally condemned. In his opinion, the criticism of foreigners was perfectly justified by the Proclamation of General Gordon, which now ran through the whole length and breadth of Africa. But there was another point upon which foreigners had, on several occasions, expressed their astonishment—namely, the course which proceedings were taking in our Parliament with regard to this question. Having watched with interest, as they always did, the debates in that House as reported regularly in *Galignani's Messenger* and other newspapers which circulated throughout the whole of France, they were astonished to find that two of the most eminent right hon. Members of the Liberal Party who, as it were, kept the outposts on the other side of the House, and certainly very often turned the flank of the enemy, should vote for the very policy which they had condemned. Had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) been in his place, he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) would have taken the opportunity of expressing his regret that so distinguished a Member of the Liberal Party, who was inferior to no man in the country in talent and ability, should have voted contrary to his opinions. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) also had concluded a great speech with these words—"I decline to give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury;" but the right hon. Gentleman must have been aware that he was himself drawing a bill of exchange upon a Government which he knew to be discredited. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) said that the action of those two right hon. Gentlemen had not raised the character of the British Parliament in the eyes of foreigners. Then he came to the view of foreigners as to what ought to be the policy of the English Government in the present crisis. Their opinion was that we should go boldly into Egypt, and assume the Protectorate of the country. They spoke to this effect—"We admire the British character; we know your honour; we will give you the Protectorate for a certain term of years. Administer Egypt as best you can, and at the end of whatever period it may be, come to us, and then, if we find that the affairs of Egypt under your auspices have been wisely administered, let us put our heads together and institute an independent Egyptian Government." In that way the road to India, the great highway of commerce, would be protected under the eyes of the Great Continental Powers. That appeared to him to be the general opinion in France. The suggestion was a wise one, and embodied a policy which he thought the Government would do well to adopt. But the present policy of the Government was neither one thing nor another; it was vacillating and unintelligible, and did not commend itself either to this country or to any of the European States. Then as regarded the future. They were considering what was to be done, and how they could extricate themselves from the difficulties which surrounded them. Were they to evacuate the Soudan? He said, with all respect for the opinions of those who differed him, that the evacuation of the Soudan was an impossibility. They had the duties and responsibilities of a great nation to discharge; it was not more than half-a-century ago that we emancipated our own slaves; and it was our bounden duty to hold the country until the horrors and iniquities of that accursed traffic, the Slave Trade, had been rooted out. No doubt, one of three courses might be adopted—the total abandonment, the total retention, or the partial retention of the Soudan; but he was most strongly of opinion that the partial retention of that country was the best policy under the circumstances. By drawing a line from Dongola along the Nile down to Khartoum, and then straight across the Soudan, and from Kassala to Massowah, a parallelogram would be formed embracing a vast region over which we might extend the blessings of a wise administration, and in that way prevent the abominable iniquities of the Slave Trade. He said that General Gordon, who, during his five years' rule in the Soudan, had done wonders, was the proper man to be made Governor of that country; and under his administration he had no doubt that the Eastern portion of it, at any rate, might be brought into a state of order and peace. There then was the proposal to hold only the littoral of the Red Sea; but foreigners were generally of opinion that to hold to a line 20 miles from the coast would not prevent the incursions of the wild tribes of the interior, and that the country, under such an arrangement, would be in a constant state of disturbance. He asked Her Majesty's Government to make up their minds quickly as to what should be done; and it was not only he, but General Gordon himself, who asked them to be prompt, in order to prevent the continuance of the present disturbances. He respectfully asked Her Majesty's Government to put an end to this position of uncertainty, hesitation, vacillation, and bad management. If the Prime Minister were present, he would remind him that Lord Bacon had said—"The first quality of statesmanship is boldness; the second, boldness; and the third, boldness." The want of that great quality in the Councils of the Government had been the cause of great evils in our management of the Egyptian embroglio. He could not help saying that the truth of that proposition had been manifested in the case of his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), whose possession of the quality of boldness, in an eminent degree, had enabled him to take and to retain a strong hold upon the public opinion of the country. Finally, he urged upon Her Majesty's

Government the adoption of a bold and energetic policy, as the only means by which they could put an end to the Slave Trade and settle the Egyptian Question in a manner satisfactory to the people of this country and to Foreign Powers.

SIR HARRY VERNEY said, he hoped that the House and the country generally would suspend their judgment in regard to the Proclamation of General Gordon until that gallant officer had an opportunity of explaining it himself. Having long known General Gordon, he felt quite convinced that there was no greater or more determined enemy of slavery than General Gordon himself, and he had no doubt in the world that General Gordon believed the course he was adopting was the one best calculated ultimately to destroy the Slave Trade. Of course, he (Sir Harry Verney) did not know what explanation General Gordon might offer; but he thought it was quite possible that he would be able to offer one which would amply justify his course of action. General Gordon might have deemed it expedient to select the most cruel slave-hunter and slave-driver in the country, because he might be convinced that Zebehr Pasha in command of Khartoum was the only man who would be able to put down the Slave Trade. General Gordon might know that the previous connection of Zebehr Pasha with slave-trading, slave-hunting, and slave-driving rendered him the fittest man to put down the Slave Trade in the end. He (Sir Harry Verney) was quite certain that General Gordon's first object was to pacify the Soudan; and in order to accomplish that object, he might have found it necessary to put a man in power who was able to control others. He would not be surprised to find that that was the case. He knew that one of General Gordon's objects was to find out who were the men best fitted to govern the Soudan in connection with Egyptian rule; but when General Gordon got to Khartoum, he might have found that that was impracticable. His great object must be to put down the Slave Trade; but he might feel that, in order to secure the pacification of the country in the first instance, it was necessary to put in power those who were really able to rule it. Zebehr Pasha, although he had made his fortune by dealing in slaves, would probably, if placed in power, do his utmost to put down the trade. He was afraid that he was the only Member of that House who had been in the plantations and seen all the horrors of slavery. He was almost the only one who had voted against the continuance of slavery in the British Possessions in the year 1834, and who knew all about the horrors of the "Middle Passage." No one could be more opposed to slavery than he was, and he felt confident that General Gordon, in his proceedings, must have had in view the limitation and final suppression of the Slave Trade. He thought nothing that had been stated by the Prime Minister warranted the construction put upon his language as to India by the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing). He did not believe that any man had a higher opinion of the value of our Indian Possessions to this country than the Prime Minister. He had heard the right hon. Gentleman speak warmly and authoritatively on that subject, and he could not believe that the expression of the hon. Member for Orkney was at all warranted by any words that had fallen from the Prime Minister. His (Sir Harry Verney's) own opinion was that our Possession of India was one of the brightest jewels in the Crown. No greater responsibility was ever committed by the Almighty to any nation in the world than had been committed to us in the government of India, and no greater benefits had ever accrued to another country ruled over by foreigners than had accrued to India. He thought no greater attention had ever been paid to the welfare of the Indian people than by the noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for War when he was Indian Minister, and conducted the Administration of that great Empire. He (Sir Harry Verney) entertained strong feelings in regard to India, and he believed it had been governed by the best Civil servants to be found in the world—the most able, the most upright, and the most honourable who had ever administered the affairs of any country; and he repeated that India was one of the brightest jewels in the British Crown. He had, however, only been induced to rise in order to express his anxiety that hon. Members should not too hastily form a judgment in regard to the course taken by General Gordon, in the absence of full information. He was quite sure that when they received full information the country would approve the steps which General Gordon was taking in order to put a stop to the foul and horrible system of slavery.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he wished to say a few words as one who was closely connected with the shipping interests of the country. He was of opinion that the action of Her Majesty's Government throughout all these transactions had been such as to destroy our commerce, and very materially to interfere with the progress of that commercial prosperity in Egypt with which this country was closely identified. He was quite satisfied that he was expressing the opinions, not only of those who usually acted with him, but of hon. Members on both sides of the House, when he ventured to say that it had been proved, in the course of the debate, that the Government had constantly vacillated in their policy, and had frequently changed their views. He had no desire to repeat what had already been stated by previous speakers, who had dealt with the subject very exhaustively; but he thought they were in a position to form some opinion as to the state of the facts presented by Her Majesty's Government, together with what had been advocated on that side of the House. So far, the only excuse which Her Majesty's Government had offered for their vacillating policy was that the origin of all of it was the former existence of the Dual Control; and, secondly, that they were now doing everything in their power to remedy the mistakes they had originally made. With regard to the Dual Control, he would only say that Lord Granville himself admitted that the Dual Control had been of great benefit to Egypt. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), who addressed the House early in the debate, clearly pointed out that it was not the Dual Control, but really the Dual Note, which had led to the original complications. France did not continue her alliance with this country, as Her Majesty's Government had anticipated; and when France retired it became at once apparent that the state of things was entirely altered, that a new responsibility was cast upon Her Majesty's Government, and that that responsibility was to protect Egypt, which they professed to take under their charge. Unfortunately, they had not done that; and they had not only broken their faith with Egypt, but with Europe as well. In the course of the debate some of Her Majesty's Ministers had stated that we owed a great deal to Egypt. He was afraid that one of the cardinal mistakes which had guided the policy of Her Majesty's Government was that they had regard to the interests of every other country in the world, while they were neglectful of our own. In Alexandria a large English commercial interest had been gathered together for many years past, and he was surprised to learn that such was the state of uncertainty occasioned by the policy of the Government, that not a single warehouse destroyed at the time of the bombardment of Alexandria had been rebuilt. No commercial house would go to any expense, because it was not known how soon Egypt would be abandoned altogether. The Government told the House that we had rights in Egypt; but those rights had been crippled. They told the House that it was impossible for us to exercise a Protectorate over the whole of Egypt, but that we might remain to protect Egypt Proper. What the country wanted to know, and especially those connected with the commercial interests, was what Her Majesty's Government meant by protecting Egypt Proper? Hitherto they had shown such vacillation and such uncertainty in their policy that the country had a right to expect them to state distinctly now what they meant by protecting Egypt. In the course of the debate there had been a statement from the Government that they considered the Protectorate of Egypt to extend not only to Egypt Proper, but to the littoral of the Red Sea. That was not the original policy of Her Majesty's Government; but it was one of the changes of front which had occurred during these debates. What he wanted to know was, whether they were prepared, and how far they were prepared, to protect the littoral of the Red Sea? Were they prepared to remain there in sufficient force to be able to protect the shipping and the trade of the district; or were they going to occupy it with such a miserable force that at any time the Mahdi and the inland tribes might come down to Suakin and destroy their power? That was a very likely thing to result, unless Her Majesty's

Government were prepared to state boldly and firmly that they would never leave Egypt until she was settled, until she was completely tranquillized, and until her enemies were totally defeated. The House had received no such statement yet from Her Majesty's Government; but the Government complained of the Dual Control, and tried to make the country believe, in spite of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that they were victims of the conduct of the former Government. It was all very well to talk of the obligations of the late Government; but if that Government had been in Office, he believed they would never have allowed Egypt to be brought into such a state as that in which it was in at present. They would have had sufficient firmness to protect British interests. When the Government talked of the Dual Control, he could not help thinking that they had entered into a Dual Control themselves. A Dual Control for the protection of a weak country by two great ones might be of advantage; but they had altered the whole aspect of affairs, and, instead of having a Control which consisted of two great Powers over a weak one, they had joined with Egypt in a Dual Control — a great country with a weak one; and such a state of things was absolutely disastrous to the interests of the weak one. Instead of assuming the responsibilities which devolved upon them after the bombardment of Alexandria, they had formed a Dual Control which was certain to be fraught with dangerous results. What might have been predicted had happened in Egypt. They had weakened the country they professed to protect; they had turned out the Administration of the country they professed to govern; they had refused her every means which she could use for strengthening her power; and they had allowed British soldiers to join the Egyptian Army, and had then permitted that Army to be destroyed. What was their policy now? To his mind, it was a policy of extreme danger and of extreme weakness. They had now a Dual Control of a different kind. They had tried a Dual Control with different nations; but they had now a Dual Control with a single man at the head of it, and their difficulties were caused, to a great extent, by the extraordinary position in which they had placed General Gordon at Khartoum. Everyone admitted that General Gordon was one of the bravest of British soldiers, and one in whom every confidence might be placed; but surely no man was ever placed in such a position as that which General Gordon occupied at the present moment. They had placed him in a position of almost irresponsible power. They had promised to uphold everything he did. What was the consequence? They had General Gordon asking General Graham to go up with his troops to assist him at Khartoum; while, on the other hand, they had Her Majesty's Government forbidding General Graham to leave the neighbourhood of Suakin. On the one hand, General Gordon was making peace with the False Prophet; and, on the other hand, Her Majesty's Government were fighting a battle with the high priest of that False Prophet. Such a state of things was unparalleled in the history of the country; and he could not help thinking that Her Majesty's Government had placed Egypt in a position not only most embarrassing, but most disgraceful. He believed that the only result of the present policy of the Government must be a heavy loss. There must be a further expenditure of money, and he feared a further loss of valuable lives. He thought the Government ought to speak with no uncertain sound, and that they should satisfy the earnest wish of the country as to their policy. Was General Graham to be ordered to advance?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: He has never been asked to advance. I did not like to interrupt the hon. Member just now, but the statement he made had not the slightest foundation.

MR. WHITLEY said, the House were in this difficulty—that they were obliged to rely upon the statements which appeared in the newspapers. Her Majesty's Government told them that there were telegrams. Then why did they not produce those telegrams, and show the actual position of General Gordon? The House were not in a proper position to discuss the matter in the absence of the telegrams. As, however, the information in the possession of the Government was not put before the House, hon. Members were obliged to have recourse to the statements which appeared in the papers. Would Her

Majesty's Government, at this eleventh hour, tell the House if they were going to remain in Egypt to protect, not merely European interests, but the general interests of Egypt herself? What the country wanted to know was, whether they intended to remain in Egypt, so as to be able to protect, not only Egypt Proper, but the littoral of the Red Sea; or would they leave Egypt, as had been stated, he believed, by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), to "stew in its own juice?" That was the language of one of the Ministers of the Crown. Did they propose to continue that policy? The country demanded more; they demanded that we should remain in Egypt with a firm government and a firm hand until the prosperity of the country could be assured, because we could not leave her bankrupt and exposed to her enemies. If not, Egypt would have been in a far better position if she had never been allied to this country at all. Her Majesty's Government had taken upon themselves a deep responsibility, and they were bound to fulfil that responsibility in the interests of England, of Egypt, and of the European Nations. He did not ask the Government to drag in any Treaties the country had entered into. He was a believer in the faithful observance of Treaties; and upon the fidelity which Treaties were maintained would depend the peace of Europe. But what he did say was, that having taken upon ourselves new responsibilities, we were bound to fulfil those responsibilities in the face of Europe and in the face of the world. Therefore it was that hon. Members on that side of the House would again and again appeal to the Government, in the interests of this country and of Egypt, to fulfil those obligations they had unhappily brought upon themselves. It would not do to act upon the policy hitherto pursued. There had been a new policy from day to day, and England had never been able to know what the real policy of the Government was from day to day. The House had been told that the policy of the Government was "Rescue and retire;" but a policy of "rescue and retire" was a fatal policy, and was the unfortunate policy which had led to the present complications. If they had not sent away the troops from Egypt, the late massacre would have been avoided. They paid no attention to the remonstrances addressed to them; but they believed in their own vacillating policy, and imagined that things would be brought right by the chapter of accidents. They had been deceived once, and they were now deliberately deceiving the country. Now, if they had their eyes open to the real state of things, they ought to act as English statesmen in the interests of England and in the interests of Egypt, and for the peace of the world. He knew that he was addressing the House under a great disadvantage in not being able to speak to the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley). Hon. Members on that side of the House would have been glad to take a Division upon that Amendment, but the Government declined to give them the opportunity. It had always been the hereditary view of Members on that side of the House that the Government of the Queen must be maintained, and they were, therefore, unable to support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote. They were placed in the position of being bound to support the Government; but they warned the Government that they were not, by continuing that mistaken policy, to expect the Opposition to come forward in their support again on a similar occasion. He believed that if the Government did not at once take a bold and decisive policy, there would be more lives of English soldiers sacrificed, and that blood would be shed and lives lost owing to negligence, want of energy, and want of courage on the part of the Government of the day. He hoped the House might yet be able to receive such a declaration from the Government as would give confidence to the country. To talk of leaving the Egyptians to "stew in their own juice" could not give confidence either to this country or to Egypt. He believed that there were many hon. Members opposite who did not approve of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, but who would do everything in their power to maintain the interests of commerce and the interests of Egypt. He asked the Government to speak out, and tell the House what their future policy would be; and, although late in the day, England would only be too gratified to learn that Her Majesty's

Ministers were not afraid of the responsibilities they had brought upon themselves.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he desired, as a military man, to make one or two observations upon the Vote now before the Committee; and he thought it would be well that one of the officials connected with the War Office should give the House some information regarding that Vote. They were asked to vote £307,900, and out of that sum £209,050 was expenditure due to military operations in Egypt. He believed that the whole of that expenditure was not confined to the expedition lately sent to Suakin and that neighbourhood, because he saw among the items several which could not possibly be connected with that expedition, but which must have relation to military movements in other parts of Egypt. He referred, for instance, to the item for Metals, and also to an item of £2,900 for Camp Equipage. He had thought that the large number of troops we had had in Cairo were in barracks, although we had not a large number there for the last few months, except Cavalry. There was another item of £13,300 for Miscellaneous Expenditure, which he also thought would require some explanation. Without alluding further to these items, he wished to make a few observations in connection with the expedition to Suakin, and the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. The first expedition of Baker Pasha was to relieve Tokar; but Sinkat had already fallen, and though some Members of the Government said that we had relieved Tokar, he believed that garrison had surrendered many days before the expedition even landed at Trinkitat. There was no doubt that Baker Pasha's expedition was a most unfortunate move both for the Egyptian Government and for the Government of this country. He had had placed under his command the gendarmerie, which he had used the greatest care to make efficient as gendarmerie; but they were never intended to act as regular soldiers, either in Egypt Proper or in any expedition into the Soudan. He (Sir Henry Fletcher) well recollected reading in the papers that when this expedition was first started from Cairo, a large portion of Baker Pasha's so-called Army were very loth indeed to go on this expedition, and, in fact, on one occasion they were so resolute in their determination not to enter the trains for conveyance to Suez, that the officer commanding the Cavalry of that expedition had to charge and drive the men before him into the trains. This expedition had been very unfortunate. A very large loss of life occurred; many English and other foreign officers sacrificed their lives in the endeavour to keep these men to the front; but they were determined that they would not face the foe, and they fled by hundreds and thousands, and were cut and mown down, notwithstanding the exertions of the English and other European officers. That expedition failed completely; and what happened? They had to retire to Suakin, and when they arrived at Suakin the remainder of Baker Pasha's force turned mutinous; and, no doubt, it was wise to disband them, and apply for further help from the English Government. He would like to know why the gendarmerie were used in this expedition? The Egyptian Government, he believed, had a large force of Egyptian soldiers who had been under training for many months by that brave and gallant soldier, General Wood, a man who had devoted his time and his energies to this cause, and he feared had also, in some degree, ruined his health by the exertions he had gone through; and at the moment when it might have been supposed that that Egyptian Army would have been made use of, they were not utilized, although Her Majesty's Government had stated that that Army was in such an efficient state that they would be able to order the withdrawal of all, or, at least, very nearly all the English troops from Cairo, and place the safety of Egypt in the hands of that Egyptian Army. Something must surely have happened to show that that Army was not of such value as the Committee had been led to believe; and he thought it was a most fortunate day when the Government resolved to reverse their decision to withdraw the English troops from Cairo, and that, at any rate, a small portion were available for the expedition which had been sent to Suakin and the neighbourhood. He would also like to make one or two allusions to a telegram which was sent from the Adjutant General of the Forces in England to Cairo. He quite admitted that that despatch was very concise, and was very well framed; but he thought there were one or two points in it which would help to show that England was now practically, if not really, reigning in Egypt. That despatch directed a battery of Artillery to be taken from General Wood's forces up to Suakin, and in that despatch he found the words "Baring will give authority." He would like to ask the Government whether any intimation was given to, or any leave asked of, the Khedive or General Wood in respect to this authorization? The only name mentioned in the despatch was in this way—"Baring will give necessary authority." Those few words alone, he thought, proved that the Government were in command of the Egyptian Army; otherwise they would have no right or authority to use those words. At all events, no field-battery was used in the expedition to Tokar or Suakin, although it had once been stated that a field-battery and guns would have been of the greatest assistance to General Graham; and he believed that they would have saved the lives of many officers and men of the Cavalry when they charged and endeavoured to disperse the rebels. There was one thing, at any rate, which he thought Her Majesty's Government ought to do. During these debates he had not heard one word from the Treasury Bench, thanking the officers and the men for the devotion which they had shown in the expedition. These men laid down their lives, willingly and gladly, in answer to the call of duty; and he thought it was only due to them that some recognition of that should be made from the Treasury Bench in honour of those brave and gallant soldiers. One lesson to be learned from this expedition was that these Arab rebels were a foe not to be despised. They were armed simply with spears and knives; but with those old-fashioned weapons they were able to inflict great injury on our Cavalry. They lay down as our Cavalry charged upon them, and as the horses went over them they sprang up and hamstrung the horses, or, if they failed in that, they speared the riders. It was the old story; and there was no doubt that the proper weapon for the Cavalry in these irregular engagements with wild tribes was the lance instead of the sword. When these men crouched down, it was impossible for the troopers to reach them; but the lance would be much more effective. There was another circumstance in connection with this expedition to which he wished to call attention. He thought it was a most fortunate thing that, through the wise policy of the late Government, the Suez Canal was available, and was made use of for the transit of our troops from England and from India, because there was a troopship on the way home from India with a regiment—the York and Lancashire — of old soldiers who had served for many years in India, together with a small body of the 10th Hussars, who were also old Indian soldiers. These old soldiers were, no doubt, of the greatest service in mixing with the younger soldiers, and in helping to maintain that discipline and courage which he was proud to say all had shown in this expedition. But he saw, from a telegram from Lord Northbrook, that the *Jumna,* which was on its way home, had on board the 10th Hussars, and he suggested that, if necessary, the Aden Cavalry, about 300, might be brought, who were used to irregular warfare and had been abroad; and he was sorry they had not been made use of, as he believed they would have saved the lives of some of the British Cavalry who fell in the recent engagement. One question now to be considered was, what was to become of Suakin when this expedition against Osman Digna was ended? The papers stated that a fresh expedition was to start from Suakin, most probably to-morrow morning—in fact, that it had already advanced seven or eight miles into the desert. The force, he believed, had orders to find Osman Digna, if possible, and his rebel army; but they were not to follow him up into the mountains. He agreed that it would be bad policy to follow these Arabs through defiles and passes in a mountainous country, where they would probably find no water, and where they would be exposed to great risk of defeat; but the question was, if they could not find Osman Digna, what was the intention of the Government with regard to Suakin? It had been stated that the policy of the Government was to give up a certain portion of the Soudan; but it was also said that the littoral of the Red Sea was to be maintained. If we were to hold our route to India, there was no doubt that Suakin and the littoral of the Red Sea must be held; but the matter came to this—if the English troops were withdrawn from Suakin, how were the Government going to garrison that town? In a few weeks, the climate of Suakin would be such that the English troops would not be able to exist there. Were they going to garrison it with those Egyptian troops who, it had been said on many occasions, were not to be relied upon; or would they employ foreign mercenaries? If he might make a suggestion, he did not see why the West India regiments, who had been taken from the West Coast of Africa, should not be employed to garrison Suakin, and the other places. They were men with whom he had served many years ago in the West Indies, and he knew that they were a most quiet, frugal, well-behaved body of men — men who were most obedient to their officers, and who could stand any climate such as that at Suakin. He would suggest to the Government to consider whether they would not employ those men to garrison Suakin, instead of putting a number of English soldiers there, at the risk of their lives. Now, he would pass to another part of the Soudan. General Gordon was at Khartoum. He had sent many telegrams, saying that all was going well, and that there was no fear for Khartoum, or that part of the Soudan. He had made the Mahdi Sultan of Kordofan, and in a great measure given the Mahdi encouragement in regard to slavery; but during the last few days telegrams had come from Khartoum putting quite a different face on the picture. General Gordon was was now reported to be to a certain extent in danger, and he had suggested various things being done for his safety. One was, that a certain number of English troops should be sent up the Nile to help to secure his safety, in case he wished to withdraw. But it must be borne in mind, in considering this suggestion, that in a few weeks the climate would be unbearable for English troops, and if the Egyptian troops were sent without being backed up by English troops, he feared the result would be very serious. General Gordon was also reported to have asked for two squadrons of Cavalry to be sent from Suakin to Berber to open up that route. He (Sir Henry Fletcher) had no idea what the distance was between Suakin and Berber; but he believed it was a very considerable distance — perhaps several hundred miles — and if these squadrons of Cavalry were sent there, wells were not very numerous, and unless a line of communication was kept between the advancing squadrons and Suakin, they would be in danger of being cut off by the various tribes. This was only a report from Khartoum; and he should like to ask the Government whether they had received any information in connection with the matter, because it would be, he thought, a most extraordinary thing if General Gordon had made this suggestion? It was also reported from Khartoum that the retirement of the garrisons was imperilled, and that General Gordon had demanded the immediate decision of the Government. He believed General Gordon had said that it was a question, not of days, but of hours, whether the telegraph wire might not be cut, and he would be prevented from communicating with Cairo. This was a most important matter, and the Committee ought to have some explanation from the Government as to what they intended to do, if this statement was true, He also wished to urge the Government not to be content with sending a small force up the Nile. A considerable force ought to be sent if the safety of General Gordon and the garrisons he was trying to withdraw was to be secured. There was no doubt that General Gordon had been checkmated by the indecision of the Government. The Mahdi was now all powerful. He had been made Sultan of Kordofan, and he could now do almost what he liked in that portion of the Soudan. It also had been recommended that Zebehr Pasha should be appointed to succeed General Gordon. Zebehr had always been known in this country as the greatest slave dealer in the Soudan; and it was a question for the Government whether a man who had that character, and who bore in Egypt the name of the "Scourge of Central Africa," should be appointed Governor of that portion of the Soudan. We were now practically reigning in Egypt, and the sooner Her Majesty's Government said so openly and distinctly the better. A few months ago, to show that we were reigning in Egypt, we dismissed the Ministry of Cherif Pasha and appointed the Ministry of Nubar Pasha. Whether Nubar Pasha was any better than Cherif Pasha was, he thought, very doubtful; but when that change of Ministry took place, a Fellah who was asked by an Englishman whether he considered that the substitution of Nubar Pasha for Cherif Pasha was better for Egypt, replied—"One Pasha very like another Pasha." He (Sir Henry Fletcher) thought that was true; but, for the sake of this country, he must urge the Government to give some explanation of their policy, if they had one. The country was looking for an explanation of their policy. The Prime Minister told the House, a few nights ago, that his determination was to quit Egypt immediately matters were put in order and things became tranquil. There was no doubt that English troops would have to be kept in Egypt for many years to come, in order that Egypt might be put in order; and what would keeping a large number of English troops in Egypt mean? The Egyptian Government was in such a miserable state with regard to its finances that it would be impossible for it to find sufficient money to pay for the maintenance of these troops; and then, if Egypt could not pay for their maintenance, it would be hard on the British taxpayer that he should have to pay to provide for these troops, when it was said that we were not reigning in Egypt, or taking possession of Egypt. He hoped that to-night the Committee might get some true and explicit explanation from the Government, and also that they might be informed whether these rumours that were flying about, as coming from Khartoum, were true or not; because, if it was true that General Gordon had been checkmated by the policy or by the vacillation of the Government, the whole country would feel more strongly than ever that the Government was not worthy of support, and would resolve that a better Government should be brought into power. There was no doubt that the feeling in the country was very strong, as had been proved last week at one of the elections. He knew Brighton well, and, being down there, he had asked the people what was the cause of this change in their political views, and why something like 500 Liberals had supported the junior Member for Brighton? The answer he got from every man who was well informed, and who watched the action of the Government, was that they voted for the junior Member for Brighton because they were tired of, and had no faith in, the vacillating policy of the present Government. At the recent election in Somersetshire there was also a considerable majority for the Conservative candidate over the majority in 1880, and there was no doubt that that majority was augmented by the policy of the Government in regard to Egypt. He had simply spoken as an old soldier, anxious to keep up the honour of England and English troops, and he trusted the Government would now give some explicit explanation.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he also deeply regretted that more had not been said from the Front Ministerial Bench in praise of the zeal and gallantry of the forces on the Red Sea Coast. The attitude which had been taken by the Party of which he was a humble Member was one of admiration for the exploits of our soldiers and sailors whenever they did their duty, as they had undoubtedly done their duty of late. But they had never considered that the Forces of Her Majesty should be politicians. It was their duty simply to obey and carry out their orders, wherever they might be; and whether the cause in which they were engaged was just or unjust—whether the war in which they were called upon to take part was a necessary or unnecessary war—they equally regarded the gallant deeds of our soldiers and sailors to the country with satisfaction and praise. For that reason, they felt that the exploits of the Queen's Forces were deserving of the admiration and thanks of the country. But the persons who were responsible for the present war, and for the many blunders which had marked the policy of this country in its dealings with Egypt during the last two years, were not the Queen's Forces, but the Ministers of the Crown; and the Conservative Party held themselves free to criticize those Ministers, without any detraction from their admiration of the gallantry of the troops. There could be no doubt about the responsibility of Her Majesty's Ministers. They were clearly responsible for everything which had taken place in Egypt; because, undoubtedly, after the successful battle of Tel-el-Kebir, in September, 1882, they had been in comple control of the country. That control had necessarily been increasing, as everyone foresaw it must increase, week by week, and even day by day. At the present moment no single step could be taken, and, as a matter of fact, no single step was taken, either in regard to the policy or the administration of Egypt without the previous assent of Her Majesty's Representative at Cairo. An interesting and remarkable letter appeared in *The Times* some days ago, purporting to give the views of a distinguished foreigner resident in Egypt as to our policy. He gave a list with which he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) would not trouble the House, but which ran somewhat as follows:—That no alterations in regard to prisons, legal procedure, cattle disease, police, sanitary arrangements, sites for custom house or schools—much less in regard to the more important questions of State finances, debts of the fellaheen, and the higher branches of administration, &c.—could be dealt with by the Egyptian Ministers without previously consulting Sir Evelyn Baring; and the writer concluded with the remarkable but natural expression—

> "Why not do away with this sham altogether, and acknowledge to the world that you are really administering the affairs of Egypt?"

The advantages of such a course were apparent, except, as the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had stated, the Government would thereby be deprived of the useful buffer which now existed between themselves and English public opinion. If they were to assume in name the Government of Egypt, Her Majesty's Ministers would be amenable to public opinion for every act that was done in Egypt. They were in truth morally responsible now; but it was convenient for Ministers, who were not able to make up their mind a week beforehand, to be able to throw the blame of their own vacillation upon the unfortunate dummies whose own power of organization and activity was paralyzed by the employment of British officials, while the administrative power of the English officials was destroyed by the necessity of working through these Egyptian dummies. He had ventured, in the last debate upon this question, to put before the House, with considerable diffidence, what seemed to him to be the only policy for freeing ourselves from our difficulties. He had suggested that we should undertake the definite administration of Egypt. He did not advocate the annexation of Egypt, nor even what was commonly called a Protectorate over it, unless, indeed, such Protectorate could be obtained by negotiation or purchase from the present Sovereign. But what he advocated was a definite Administration publicly acknowledged before the world by English officials in Egypt, for a given period, such arrangement to be brought about by negotiation with the Suzerain of Egypt, the Sultan of Turkey. We could do nothing without the assent of the Sultan; but with his support we could do what we pleased. Nothing, he thought, would be more easy than to obtain that assent, if the Government were willing to cast aside their old prejudices and wild theories with regard to Turkey, and approach the Porte in a fair and conciliatory spirit. Turkey was fully sensible of all the difficulties of the matter, and was not blind to the position in which she found herself placed; because Turkey, no less than this country and France, was menaced by an Arab Revolt. Turkey must realize the awkwardness of the position, and, in view of recent occurrences in the East, must know that her power was seriously menaced by the possibility of another crusade such as that which took place in 1876 and 1877. She would, therefore, be willing to obtain the support of this country in the event of certain contingencies, and in return would give us the right to administer the affairs of Egypt. But we must go to her in the spirit in which Lord Palmerston or Lord Beaconsfield would have approached her, and admit her rights without usurping them. If that course were followed, we should, no doubt, obtain her cordial assent to a British Administration in Egypt for a period of years. What would be the advantage of that step? Our present difficulties in Egypt arose from the uncertainty which prevailed as to our policy in Africa. We were unable to deal with French intrigues, because France was extremely active in making partizans, and French agents would go to influential persons in Egypt for the purpose of spreading their own ideas, saying—"You cannot depend upon the English. They are always talking about going out of Egypt; and when they go you will have to be left in the lurch." He did not know whether Her Majesty's Government had any idea of the strength of French intrigues in Egypt at this moment. There was one active just before the movement of Arabi, which was found to be a most serious obstacle to our operations. He had no doubt that similar intrigues were going on now. Only that morning there was an interesting letter in *The Times* from Alexandria, in which the Correspondent—one of the most intelligent in Europe—stated—

> "Matters, however, have now arrived at such a point that, unless we wish to wreck the entire Administration, our policy must be altered. Some of the best of the English officials openly declare that, unless measures be taken to prevent French intrigue, they will resign their positions. The treble Administration is wholly indefensible; and seeing that our efforts to conciliate our quondam allies receive no return and only result in the ruin of Egypt, it is clearly advisable that they should cease."

The writer went on to give instances of successful administration in Egypt, solely managed by Englishmen, or from which Frenchmen were excluded, and thus concluded—

> "Against this take the railways, which are under an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a Native, and concerning which the complaints of a useless bureaucracy are perpetual. The position of the Domains' administration, in which a Frenchman, who is worse than useless, has just been re-appointed at a large salary, is, unfortunately, notorious. In the Daira corruption is rampant, and the English member is outvoted in every attempt to effect the smallest reform. My own remarks on the futility of half measures must have become nauseous. Will the Government listen to General Gordon's opinions? His words are as applicable to Egypt as to the Soudan. He says, 'We cannot blame this people for rising, when no definite sign is shown of our establishing a permanent Government.'"

Were we alone made responsible, the French officials would cease to exist, or would understand that their opportunity for paralyzing our efforts was at an end. In consequence, we should have some chance of bringing that administrative power, which undoubtedly did belong to British officials, especially British officials trained in the East, to bear upon the affairs of the country. We should at once have the administration working smoothly; and it was upon regular and beneficent administration that the welfare of Oriental people mainly depended. It was upon sound administration, far more than in theoretical forms of Constitutional Government, nicely-planned Legislative Assemblies, and paper fabrics of that kind, which were comparatively valueless to these people—it was upon the administration of a country that the prosperity of the people, their finance, and all which went to make them happy and secure depended. If that administration were in the hands of Englishmen, he had not the smallest doubt that the troubles, difficulties, and disasters in Egypt, the bad finance, the corruption, and the suffering amongst the fellaheen would practically cease in a very short time, and with them would cease many of our political troubles. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he limited his advocacy of an English administration of Egypt strictly by the condition that we were able to do it by a friendly arrangement with the Sovereign Power. He had already stated, and he would reiterate it to-night, that we could not play fast-and-loose with the rights of the Turkish Government any more than we could with the rights of a Christian Power. Whatever might be thought of the Turkish Government, whatever might be thought of the Turkish system, or of the Turkish people, there was no doubt that the Sultan was the rightful Sovereign of Egypt. If they once seriously broke International Law in this case, as they had broken it over and over again of late, they would furnish to other Powers a fatal precedent, and the privilege of doing the same when it suited their purpose. They would give Russia, for instance, an excuse when it suited her to make her final attack on Asia Minor. They would, in short, set up an example which might be fatal to themselves. Whatever might be our confidence as to the respect other countries entertained for us, for our reputation and for our power, there could not be the smallest doubt that England, before long, would have to defend what was the widest and wealthiest Empire in the world against very serious aggression. When that day came, we should require the support, not only of all the material strength we had, and of the vast Possessions which Her Majesty's present Government lost no opportunity of weakening, but we should require to be supported with the consciousness of moral and international right in our dealings with the people of the world. He would not weary the House by saying anything upon the other branch of his policy, which he had ventured to put forward on a previous occasion. Since he had had the honour of a seat in the House, he had always maintained that the only way in which this country could successfully conduct her foreign policy was by an understanding with, and the co-operation of, the German Powers. That view had been received with ridicule; but he took it that our foreign alliances were the key-stone of successful operations abroad. It was a reversal of the policy of Lord Beaconsfield in this respect which had led us into our difficulties with Egypt; it was the reversal of that policy which gave the Ministry such confidence in France, that they were led along blindfold by a noble and ambitious French statesman. He believed that the German Powers represented the greatest force, both moral and material, in Europe, and that we could not look for support or for a successful alliance elsewhere; that our interests were largely, if not entirely, identical with theirs; whereas our interests clashed with those of Russia, and more or less rivalled those of France. Believing that, he only hoped it was not too late—though there were indications abroad, in the recent *rapprochement* between Berlin and St. Petersburg, that it might be rather late, he hoped it was not too late—for Her Majesty's Ministers to recur to the understanding that Lord Beaconsfield had with Berlin, which undoubtedly enabled him to carry on his policy in Egypt and elsewhere with safety and success. These were the three branches of the policy he would recommend to Her Majesty's Government—a definite administration of Egypt by England; a friendly understanding with the Porte; and a close alliance with the German Powers. In criticizing the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt with regard to this Vote of Credit, he had said just now that the Opposition laid no blame on the Army or upon their operations, which had been conducted with great skill and gallantry, but that they did lay blame on Her Majesty's Ministers. He had come across, the other day, a very interesting paragraph in a French paper, which so tersely and epigramatically gave the cause of the failures of Her Majesty's Government, that he would venture to trouble the Committee with it. This French paper said of the British Government—

> "It goes on from contradiction to contradiction, and systematically decides to do on the morrow, what it abstains from doing to-day, when too late to be of avail. England has seen nothing, has foreseen nothing, and has let herself be surprised by events."

It would not be possible to sum up the failure of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in more appropriate language than that. The grievous slaughter of the Arabs at El Teb was almost a counterpart of the destruction of, or the injury to, Alexandria. Both were brought about by the same causes—namely, a failure to realize the coming danger, and the failure to take action in time. It would not be appropriate to go back into the circumstances attending the disaster to General Hicks. They had been gone into with so much detail, and with so much effect, that he should only be wearying the House if he were again to discuss them. He might point out that energetic action, at the time of General Hicks's expedition in June or August last, would have prevented almost all the troubles which had occurred in the Soudan. He might point out that the Government were bound, either to support General Hicks in his entreaty not to be sent on that useless expedition—that fatal expedition into the wilds of Kordofan—or, if they suffered him, in spite of his protests, the Ministry were bound to see that he was supported by a sufficient and effective force. He might point out that later the Government should have been more speedy and energetic in taking action for the relief of the garrisons on the Red Sea Coast. They were really responsible for allowing Baker Pasha to march his undisciplined cravens to what was almost certain butchery—to what intelligent opinion, throughout England and Europe, knew to be certain massacre, and of which the Government had been warned over and over again. They were responsible, for they must have known that the expedition of General Baker could have but one result. He might point out, above all, how the Government had neglected their duty with regard to the brave and unfortunate garrison of Sinkat. So long as the history of this country remained he believed the betrayed and cruel fate of that brave garrison and its gallant leader would be a lasting stain, not only on the annals of this country, but on the character of Her Majesty's Ministers. Her Majesty's Government had been repeatedly warned of the perilous condition of affairs—they had had solemn despatches from their Representatives on the spot telling them of the painful and desperate condition of Tewfik Bey and his men; they had been warned over and over again by the active and intelligent newspaper correspondents of this country, who had given so much valuable and accurate information as to the course of events in that part of the world. So long ago as September, 1883, Tewfik Bey had sent, through Consul Moncrieff, a clear statement as to the state of affairs in the Soudan. He had shown that notwithstanding, by a most gallant defence, he had beaten off, with a mere handful of blacks, an attack of Osman Digna and 3,000 Arabs, the whole country was in a state of dangerous ferment, and he would require reinforcements at once if an end was to be put to the revolt. No notice was taken of Tewfik's appeal. No help was offered him; and the Committee might judge—they might gauge exactly—the danger of neglecting a movement of this kind, by comparing the fact that in September last, Tewfik Bey, with a force of 70 blacks, was able to beat off successfully Osman Digna and his 3,000 Arabs, with the fact of the desperate resistance that the same Arabs had recently offered to the disciplined troops of Her Majesty. Such was the cost and such was the danger of allowing these fanatical movements to develop. It might be worth the while of the Committee to consider how sluggish the Government had been in making up their mind to send any expedition at all into the Soudan. This was one of the most extraordinary instances in history of the way in which a Government was forced against its will to take action even at the twelfth hour. He had made a note from the official despatches, showing exactly how the mind of the Government had been made up on this question. In the first place, the news of General Baker's defeat reached this country on the 5th February last. The Committee would remember the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), whose ingenuity was far in excess of his accuracy of statement—["Oh, oh!"] Well, that was his (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's) opinion, and he was only sorry some hon. Members did not agree with it. He could give a great many proofs in support of his view if necessary. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board, who was the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, seemed still to be, in this House, the principal Minister for Foreign Affairs, because he was frequently put forward to answer any serious and important question on foreign affairs, and was generally put up to make statements when the Prime Minister did not feel himself sufficiently safe in making one. On the 6th February, the day after the receipt of the news of General Baker's defeat, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had put a question to the Government. The question was, whether they would now take steps to go to the relief of the garrisons; and this was the extraordinary answer he got from the Prime Minister, who appeared to be somewhat agitated at the time and, therefore, perhaps, did not realize what he was saying. ["Oh, oh!"] He would read the answer, and then hon. Members who interrupted him could form their own opinion. The Prime Minister, when the news of the dreadful disaster to Baker Pasha's force, which had caused the expedition of General Graham, reached this country, on being asked what steps the Government intended to take, used these words —"The Government are not called on or justified to adopt any measures of any kind." Well, he did not hear the objections which were raised a minute ago when he said the Prime Minister was agitated. It seemed to him the kindest view to take of it to say that the right hon. Gentleman was somewhat agitated when he made that statement. Later in the same day, the Government went so far as to order arms and ammunition to be sent to Admiral Hewett, but no men, though a few hours after that they ordered 150 Marines to be sent. The Marines were a useful force. They were now being mounted on horses in order to supply the deficiency in Cavalry. The Committee would notice what a useful force the Marines had been to the Government. After putting down the Fenian movement in Dublin, they were now sent, on horseback, to reconnoitre against the forces of Osman Digna. That same night Sir William Hewett asked for 500 Marines. Next day, February 7th, the

Government got so far as to order 280 Marines to go to Suakin, and the number was soon afterwards increased to 350. On the 9th, Admiral Hewett was ordered to take the command at Suakin. On February 10th, they sent out to General Gordon, who was out of reach of the telegraph, asking "if he could suggest anything for the relief of Sinkat and Tokar?" And on February 11th, they had Lord Northbrook's despatch, asking "if there was any chance of relieving Sinkat and Tokar by arms or negotiation." The right hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke) took credit to the Government for having taken immediate steps to relieve the garrisons in the Soudan; but the relief, up to the 11th February, consisted merely in the despatch of 350 Marines. On February 12th, Admiral Hewett telegraphed that Sinkat had fallen, and that the garrison had been cut to pieces; and the Prime Minister, with a somewhat remarable levity, which in anyone else would have been styled "anti-human," made a play of words as to whether the despatch referring to the unfortunate garrison said "cut up" or "cut to pieces." On February 12th, the Cabinet at last made up their minds to do something practical, for they telegraphed—

> "Steps have been taken to relieve Tokar—sufficient force will reach Suakin on the 19th or 20th."

But, so far from that promise being fulfilled, sufficient force was not at Suakin until the 26th. If the force had reached Suakin on the 19th or 20th, the garrison of Tokar would not have surrendered. The plea that the measures they had taken had been delayed till receipt of information from General Gordon would not hold water, and he had noticed that the Government had not of late laid much stress on it. If they had wished for General Gordon's opinions, they could have telegraphed in clear and unmistakable terms—"Baker has been badly beaten; what shall we do to relieve the garrisons?" But they did not do that—they asked General Gordon if he could make any suggestion for the relief of Sinkat and Tokar. There was no evidence that General Gordon knew of the desperate straits of these places, or even of the defeat of Baker Pasha. These, he thought, were sufficient reasons why they should criticize and examine the right of Her Majesty's Government to large Supplies for an expedition which a little foresight would have rendered altogether unnecessary. There had at last been a gleam of light in the policy of the Governmeht—their conduct seemed to have been marked by a ray of intelligence. ["No, no!"] He was not so hard-hearted in his judgment of Her Majesty's Ministers as some of his hon. Friends seemed to be. It was, he thought, about a week ago, when, for the first time since this question was opened, Her Majesty's Government showed some signs of an appreciation of its gravity. The indignation of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was excited by a statement from the Prime Minister to the effect that it must be remembered that there were other questions involved than merely the defence of Suakin; that the Arab movement threatened to spread to Arabia, and to involve the peace of the Ottoman Empire, and of French Provinces in North Africa; and various considerations of that kind. This, though it excited the horror and indignation of the hon. Member for Carlisle, was yet the first gleam the House had of the Government's perception of the real seriousness of the occurrences in Egypt and the Soudan. If Her Majesty's Government went on developing in the same way, in the end they might realize some of the elements of statesmanship, though it would in all probability be too late to undo the evils they had brought about. The Committee would, perhaps, here allow him to say a word or two with regard to General Gordon's position at Khartoum. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had never, either in or outside the House, criticized General Gordon's action. The Government had sent a remarkable man to fulfil an impossible mission; and the remarkable man they had sent out was doing remarkable things, although the objects of the mission appeared to remain impossible. They did not blame General Gordon for issuing what was now the notorious Slave Proclamation, however much the Government might play upon the difference between domestic slavery and what they called "slave-hunting." There could be no doubt that General Gordon's Proclamation did authorize not only domestic slavery, but slave-dealing. There was something probably less offensive and less cruel than slave-hunting, and something more than domestic slavery, and that was slave-dealing—namely, buying and selling slaves like any other merchandize in open market. As the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had pointed out, that involved great and grievous cruelty. It involved the breaking up of families, the separating of children from their parents, brothers from their sisters, wives from their husbands, and the greatest possible disruption of social ties which could be inflicted on the human race. Nevertheless, that it was which General Gordon's Proclamation had authorized in the Soudan. There was plenty of proof that such was the case. General Gordon had said, in effect, to the people—"Knowing your regret at the severe measures taken by the Government for the suppression of the slave traffic, and seizure and punishment of all concerned, according to Convention and Decrees, I confer upon you these rights—that henceforth none shall interfere with your property. Whoever has slaves shall have full right to their services, and full control over them." But domestic slavery was not forbidden by the Convention, though slave-dealing was. Therefore, it was clear from this and from the phrase "full control over them," that it was the slave traffic which the Proclamation made legal. It was obvious, therefore, that slave-dealing was allowed; and General Gordon had been obliged to allow it under the conditions under which the British Government had sent him out. General Gordon was sent out to accomplish an impossible task, and one most obnoxious to him. Though the Government had, in scattered forms, certain opinions of General Gordon's, which might be quoted to show that he believed the Soudan was a costly and difficult possession, yet there could be no doubt his original view was that they should not abandon the Soudan—that was to say, the Soudan between the White Nile and the Red Sea Coast. That he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) believed to be General Gordon's view at this moment. He believed General Gordon did not wish to abandon the Soudan, and that he felt they could not with honour abandon and leave it to anarchy. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had ventured to protest against the abandonment of the Soudan. He was sorry that the Party of which he was but an humble Member had not seen their way to taking up that view strongly—he regretted that the abandonment of the Soudan had not been protested against from the whole of the Opposition Benches. He did not say the more remote parts, such as Darfour and the Equatorial Provinces, should be held—although it was an extraordinary fact that at this moment Darfour and the Equatorial Provinces were well governed, better governed, in fact, by European officials, than any other part of the Dominions of the Khedive. With regard to what was called the Eastern Soudan—that was to say, the vast region between Dongola and the bend Westwards of the White Nile—between the White Nile and the Red Sea Coast—it was not only contrary to the interests of civilization, but he believed it to be contrary to right, for us at this time to abandon it to what was really slavery and barbarism. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex had quoted from a telegram from *The Times* Correspondent at Khartoum—a most extraordinary telegram; but the noble Lord had not given the most important portion of it. General Gordon had stated, according to the Correspondent of *The Times*, who was also our Consular Agent—

> "The emissaries of the Mahdi will succeed in raising the tribes between this and Berber. This is not owing to disaffection, but to fear caused by the pronounced policy of the abandonment of the Soudan."

And General Gordon went on to say—

> "We cannot blame them for rising, when no definite sign is shown of establishing a permanent Government here."

Then he said—

> "Be sure of one thing. If Her Majesty's Government do not act promptly, General Graham's victory will go for naught, and with the useless expenditure of blood the effect of it will evaporate."

And he added—

> "I do not believe we shall send any more telegrams, for it is no longer a question of days, but of hours."

In this state of things, were Her Majesty's Government going to put Zebehr Pasha in power at Khartoum? That would be a disgraceful thing for them to do. Let them ask General Gordon to undertake himself the administration of the Eastern Soudan; or, if he were unwilling to accept the office, let them send some other distinguished Englishman thither, such as Sir Samuel Baker. In no other way could a satisfactory result be achieved. The Government had declared, some time ago, that their main hope was bound up in the restoration of the ancestral Sultans of these Provinces; but little had been heard of this idea of late. What had become of the Sultans—where were they? The Government had tried the experiment of sending one out; he took with him 23 wives, and only got, so far as was known, to the first post on the Nile. Since his arrival at that place he had been in a state of hopeless inebriation. The idea, in the face of a fanatical crusader like the Mahdi's, of expecting to restore the ancestral Sultans and small tribal Chiefs, whose power had been broken for two generations, was most absurd, and only showed to what extremes Her Majesty's Ministers had been driven in their hopeless indecision and vacillation in regard to this question. The only plan, as he had said, was to place the administration of the country under a British Governor General, with the consent of the Sovereign Power, and to back him up with all the moral support possible. As to the argument of the cost of the administration of the Soudan, it was only used by the Government to cover their retreat. He had it on the very best authority that the Soudan could pay its own expenses. He did not believe General Gordon was in favour of the abandonment of the Soudan, for that gallant officer had declared that under a good Administration the country would pay its own expenses. It was on record, according to the figures of the Government, that in the last year of its independent administration, the Soudan only cost £96,000 above its Revenue. What was our Expedition, which had as yet only touched the coast of the Red Sea, costing us? Had it not cost us £500,000 already, and had we seen the end of the expenditure yet? Was not General Gordon asking us for troops, and were the Government going to abondon this country to anarchy? He knew that was a favourite panacea of the Treasury Bench, and that it had been deified by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney). That hon. Member had told them that anarchy was "a new birth." If it was a new birth, all he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) could say was that a great many peoples had had a new birth under the present Government. To his mind, anarchy was the greatest curse of a people; and he believed that the rule even of Zebehr Pasha was better than hopeless anarchy, which would be the result of abandoning the Soudan to its ancestral Sultans. They had been told that Her Majesty's Government were going to evacuate the Soudan altogether. Now, he had asked the other day what they were going to do in such a case as that of Kassala? Here was a great town, a great commercial centre, second only to Khartoum in importance, and which in the last 20 years had increased largely in respect of population. Twenty years ago it contained 8,000 inhabitants; now it had at least 25,000. Besides the rest of the population, there were now in Kassala 6,000 or 7,000 Egyptians—men, women, and children. How were they going to remove these people from Kassala and get them down to the Red Sea, a distance of 300 miles, and provide for them afterwards? Again, were these people to be denied compensation, unlike the people at Alexandria, for the destruction of their property? All these questions would have to be faced by Her Majesty's Government. He protested against the abandonment of the Soudan on the ground of trade also; he protested against it on the ground brought to the notice of Sir Evelyn Baring, their Agent in Egypt, by the committee of merchants, who stated that the exports of the Soudan were £11,000,000, and the imports £2,000,000, and that there were 3,000 Egyptian and 1,000 European commercial houses in the Soudan. Were the Government going to give up the great route for trade with the interior of Africa? He protested against such a policy, on the ground that it was the most ruinous and costly policy that could possibly be adopted by this country. The Government would be driven, step by step, to further action. They could not recede; they could not abandon the Soudan; they would not be allowed to abandon it. Already the Government had been met with remonstrances from France, from Turkey, and, as he believed, from other European Powers. Why, then, should they neglect this opportunity? He was convinced that, if the secret diplomatic history of these campaigns could be read, it would be found that the action of the Government, in despatching General Graham's force to Suakin, had been influenced by the pressure put upon them by Foreign Powers, and that pressure was not likely to cease. Her Majesty's Government were losing all the trade of the Soudan, and casting away the means of doing good to the people, by their half-and-half policy. [Mr. Jesse Collings: Oh, oh!] He appealed to the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) to get up in his place, and give the House his idea as to what the Government were going to do. Hon. Gentlemen on those Benches wanted to know, and the country wanted to know, how far Her Majesty's Government were going to retain their hold upon Egypt, and how far they were going to hold the Soudan? The policy of Her Majesty's Government had long been one of hesitation in respect of Egypt; but it was now becoming a policy of costly and sanguinary vacillation. He believed he should be correct in saying that, since August last, when Her Majesty's Government foolishly refused to acknowledge responsibility in the case of Hicks, 45,000 Egyptians and others had been slain, owing to the weakness and indecision of the Cabinet. How much more bloodshed and destruction of property would be required before Her Majesty's Government made up their minds to take the only course consistent with interest and duty, and their own honour—namely, that of declaring distinctly and clearly that they would secure the appointment of a British Governor General, and superintend the administration of the Soudan for a certain period? In thanking the Committee for the indulgence shown to him, he took the opportunity of expressing a hope that the present debate, and others which had recently taken place in that House, would result in forcing the hand of Her Majesty's Government a little further, and in making them adopt a more firm and consistent and honourable policy with respect to Egypt.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he did not wish to follow the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) into the rather ambitious scheme of policy which he had sketched. He did not suppose that that was the right occasion for taking stock of the whole Egyptian situation. As for the Soudan, the hon. Member for Eye had reproached hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House, who repudiated interference in that question. with a partiality for anarchy. But he had forgotten, as it was very often forgotten in discussions on the Soudan, that there had always been anarchy there, and that ever since the Egyptian Government had been responsible for the Soudan, the anarchy which they created had been more savage and ferocious than any other. His (Mr. John Morley's) authority for that statement was the Report of Colonel Stewart. The hon. Member admitted, at least, that the Leaders of the Opposition were as little inclined as Members on those Benches to accept his policy of annexation of the Soudan. He might not have risen to speak on this question but for the speech of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), who reproached some of them who sat below the Gangway with misleading, or doing their best to mislead, the country. It was certain that there was a vital difference of opinion as to the policy to be pursued in Egypt between some of them who sat there, and the hon. Gentleman; and whether they, or the hon. Gentleman, represented the feeling of the constituencies, remained to be seen. For his own part, he had no fear either of meeting the present constituencies, or the constituences enlarged as he hoped they would be, and placing before them the issue between the hon. Member and themselves. It was from that point of view that he rather deprecated what seemed to him a new departure on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) said, on Thursday last, that it would be necessary to provide for the security of Suakin during the short interval which would elapse before the final decision was come to as to the permanent garrison. That clearly indicated that Her Majesty's Government had made up their minds that Suakin was to be held. Well, that, in his view, was certainly an advance from the position taken up by Lord Granville no further back than January last. On the 9th of that month, Lord Granville wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring that, although he was favourably disposed to the retention of Suakin by Egypt, yet Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that further information and discussion would be necessary before the question of that and other ports could be definitely decided. About the same date, the Khedive himself said, in a long conversation which he had with the Correspondent of *The Times*, that, as regarded the Eastern Soudan or the littoral of the Red Sea, the Egyptian Government had no direct interest there; that it cost them money; and that, as they received it from Turkey, they must formally offer to restore it; but that its destiny did not affect Egypt. In view of these declarations by the Khedive and Earl Granville, which showed that the former had no interest in the Red Sea, and that Her Majesty's Government had not made up their minds as to the retention of Suakin, he should be interested if the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would disclose to the Committee what had been the course of information and discussion that had led Lord Granville and the Government from the position of the 9th of January to the position taken up by the noble Marquess on Thursday night, and by Lord Granville himself, in a slightly different form, on Monday last. The question of the retention of the ports was a matter of vital importance, because he might remind the Committee, without egotism, that he had ventured last year to make what had been called the most gratuitous form of mistake—a prophecy. He said, on the occasion referred to, that if we did not leave Egypt then, the Soudan would retain us in Egypt; and he would now venture upon another prophecy, and say that if we remained in Suakin we should remain in the Soudan. And we should remain in the Soudan, because it was perfectly clear that after the defeat of General Baker's force the Egyptian Government could not hold Suakin and the Red Sea ports. If, as General Gordon said, it would be an iniquity to hand back the Soudan generally to the Egyptians, he failed to see why it would be a less iniquity to hand back any particular portion of the Soudan. Then it remained to be decided whether the ports should be held by Turkey or by ourselves. It was true that Lord Granville had said that Her Majesty's Government concurred in the proposition to retocede those ports to Turkey; but nothing more had been heard of that; and it remained, therefore, for us to garrison Suakin and the Red Sea Ports. And if that were all, we might undertake the work; but it was obvious, from all the arguments used by the supporters of annexation in the Press, that the acquisition of Suakin and the Red Sea ports really meant the making of a railway to Berber, and through that to Khartoum and Sennaar. In that case the advocates of extension would speedily spring up, and quote passages from the Report of Colonel Stewart, in which he said—"If you wish to put down the Slave Trade, you will find no better way of doing it than that of opening a way through Khartoum to legitimate trade." Therefore, if Her Majesty's Government wanted to find themselves settled in the Soudan, and ultimately on their way to Central Africa, they could take no better course to that end than by establishing themselves, on however insignificant a plea, and with however small a number of troops, at Suakin. He confessed he was alarmed, not only by a sentence of the noble Marquess, but by the express statement of the grounds on which the Prime Minister justified our remaining in that place when he said—

> "We are there on good grounds; first, because Suakin is a vent for the Slave Trade, which we ought to stop; and, secondly, because it is important that we should arrest communications between the movement of which the Mahdi is the head, and a movement for which the tribes in Arabia are only too likely to be ready."

So far as the last reason was concerned, he submitted that the very way to spread the movement from Africa to Arabia was for us, who were Christians, to remain in Suakin. Indeed, the announcement of our intention to remain there had not been made many days before a telegram informed us from Jeddah that the Mahommedans in Arabia were so excited at the prospect of a Christian people establishing themselves in Suakin, that already the insurgent and discontented movement had received a further impulse. He contended that it was exactly because we were Sovereign of a great Mahommedan community that it should be our special care to abstain as much as possible from meddling in Mahommedan troubles. As for putting down the Slave Trade, the retention of Suakin was not at all necessary to that end. What we wanted for the purpose was, as Colonel Stewart said, a number of small boats for cruising off the coast—not men-of-war's boats, for they were too conspicuous—and with these far more could be done towards putting an end to the Slave Trade than by the possession of any portion of territory inland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) spoke, with great force and pathos, of the duty which England had imposed upon herself of repressing slavery and the Slave Trade. That, no doubt, was one of the most glorious pages of our history; but when we found the best authorities telling us that we should do much more to repress the Slave Trade by stopping the market in Egypt, and putting down domestic slavery, he thought we ought to pause before committing ourselves to new engagements of which we should never see the end. Sir Evelyn Baring, in November last, warned Her Majesty's Government to abstain from all interference in the Soudan, which he said would not only make the policy of withdrawal a matter of extreme difficulty, or, so far as the present generation was concerned, of impossibility, but would involve a great risk that we should be led to establish British authority on a permanent or *quasi*-permanent basis over the greater part of the Valley of the Nile. It was because he saw that this was the beginning of a new departure that he ventured as early as possible to utter his protest against it. So far as the Vote before the Committee was concerned, he was not able to follow his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) into the Lobby. But if the question was raised as to the retention of the Red Sea ports, he should not acquiesce, by vote or otherwise, in a step which he looked upon as the beginning of a most dangerous policy.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. John Morley) had exercised, both in and out of the House, a most unfortunate influence on the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government. He hoped the Committee might infer, from some of the remarks which had fallen from him, that the hon. Gentleman felt that influence to be on the wane. There was one passage in the eloquent speech of his noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton), who introduced this subject to the Committee that evening, with which he was unable to agree; and that was the passage in which he called on the Prime Minister to come forward and state what was his policy with reference to the Soudan and Egypt generally. He thought the Prime Minister had been called upon often enough to state his policy. Hon. Members had had many specimens of the kind of answer which the right hon. Gentleman thought it incumbent upon him to return to those appeals; and, for his own part, he was unwilling to call upon the right hon. Gentleman to state once more in this debate the views with which the House was unhappily too familiar. They had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman on Monday last, and he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) feared that if he were present he would only re-state them with redoubled vigour and energy. He hoped that the views which had been expressed in the course of the debate, especially those of hon. Members sitting behind the Treasury Bench, might have some effect upon the conduct and policy of Her Majesty's Government, and that the opinion of the country, already expressed with sufficient clearness in the public Press of all classes of politics, might be brought home to them by the language of their own supporters. He looked forward, therefore, with some hopefulness to seeing the Government go forward in the direction in which hon. Gentlemen on those Benches desired them to go, and he did not wish for any more explanations which might have the same unfortunate result as that of which they had reason to complain. He did not, for himself, regret that his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) was on Thursday last precluded from bringing forward his Motion on going into Committee of Supply. If he had done so, it would have been the more incumbent on Her Majesty's Government to stand by their previous utterances. But, as the matter stood, the mouths of hon. Members opposite had been opened in a manner that was not unsatisfactory to hon. Gentlemen on those Benches. The conduct of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, which had always been more or less in accordance with the feelings of the country, contrasted very strongly with the statements drawn from them by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and others who had advocated a totally different line of policy; and he believed that that duplicity of conduct and language lay at the bottom of all the misfortunes and difficulties that were now before them. He believed, moreover, that the same contradiction which prevailed between the statements of Her Majesty's Government and their conduct, and of which he and his hon. Friends so much complained, was prejudicially affecting both the military and the civil government of Egypt. The Government had throughout, from the beginning of the last Session of Parliament to the present time, said one thing while they were doing another. Under the pressure of circumstances, stronger than the Government itself, they had occasionally done the right thing; but they had always vitiated their action by the premature statement of their intention to withdraw, which stopped further progress in the right direction. Her Majesty's Government should have adopted a perfectly different line of conduct, and, instead of making premature declarations, they should have remained silent when asked to state when they intended to retire from Egypt, and then the result would have been far more in furtherance of their actual policy than the language which they had unfortunately held. But what could they expect from the Prime Minister when they found him catching at the language of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and describing the policy of Her Majesty's Government as a policy of "Rescue and retire." The word "retire" had such a magical effect upon his conscience and sympathy that he could not refrain from turning round, and, as it were, expressing his sympathy with the sentiments of the hon. Member. This anxiety to announce a policy which was inconsistent with the views of the country, and inconsistent with much of the line of action which had been adopted by the Government, equally affected the military as well as the civil situation. In that day's *Times* there was a telegram from Khartoum—he was not sure whether it was one of the telegrams which had been alluded to by other speakers—to the effect that General Gordon was greatly embarrassed in carrying on his work by the premature statement of the Government that the whole of the Soudan was to be immediately abandoned. It was quite evident General Gordon would have profited very much by a little more ambiguity and reticence on the part of the Government, because it must be recollected that the uncompromising and unqualified statements of the Prime Minister were telegraphed not merely to Cairo and Alexandria, but to the remotest parts of the Soudan, where the Arabs were in arms against us. As he was upon the subject of Khartoum, he ought to say he agreed very much with the views which were expressed just now by his hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett). He could not help thinking that events would prove that it was premature, dangerous, and impolitic to announce that the Egyptian Government would be required to withdraw from the whole of the Soudan. It was not merely that the question of slavery might cause that policy to be reconstructed as time went on; but in the interest of the civilized world, in the interest of all the enlightened and scientific men who took so much trouble now-a-days in penetrating the most barbarous regions of Central Africa, a reversal of the Government's present policy might be necessary. Scientific men were disgusted beyond measure at the surrender on the part of the Government of the great advances towards civilization which recent enterprize had brought about. It was a disgrace to this country that it should take the lead in abandoning the Valley of the Nile, which had been laid open to civilization by the heroic efforts of our great travellers. He believed that what he might call the Mesopotamia of the Nile and the town of Khartoum were points of the greatest consequence, which might by-and-bye require to be reconquered and handed over to Egypt, or some other civilized country. The scientific men were very strong and powerful in the Metropolis. Many of the scientific gentlemen with whom he was acquainted were supporters of the general policy of Her Majesty's Government; but the whole of the Government's Egyptian policy was by them unanimously condemned. He should not be afraid if the Government were to announce that they would undertake what was called a Protectorate of Egypt, although the term was a little ambiguous. He was not frightened by the examples of Protectorates which the Prime Minister put before them the other day. A Protectorate of Egypt founded upon the analogy of that of the Ionian Islands would not be a very serious or objectionable thing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking *ex cathedra* the other day, laid it down as an uncontrovertible principle that there was no alternative between the policy which the Government had pursued and the policy of absolute annexation. That was a most exaggerated and unwarranted view of the question. The Government themselves had given them an example of something between those two policies in the authority exercised in Egypt during the presence there of Lord Dufferin. There was no actual annexation then; but the policy now pursued by Her Majesty's Government was certainly very decidedly different from that which prevailed during Lord Dufferin's presence in Cairo. Lord Dufferin was responsible, in an indirect way, for all that occurred; indeed, no step was taken in civil and military government in Egypt without his authority and cognizance. The only drawback to Lord Dufferin's position was that everybody knew that his period of retention of office, or of power, could not last very long, and that it was extremely doubtful what successor might be appointed. No successor was appointed, and his (Mr. Sclater-Booth's) impression was that a great change for the worse took place on his departure in the policy of the Government. He had the opportunity of witnessing the departure of General Hicks from Egypt to the Soudan. General Hicks went as it now turned out, on a forlorn hope; but he went under the eye of Lord Dufferin, who was in power at the time, and whose complete control over the Government of Egypt was undoubted and unquestioned. It might be well for the Government to say that they renounced responsibility when they washed their hands of the whole business; but the multitude who witnessed General Hicks's departure believed that Lord Dufferin was probably on the ground, and that, if not responsible, he was a silent party to the proceedings. The people who witnessed the procession through Cairo thought more of Lord Dufferin's presence at that moment than of the protests and repudiations which were to be found in the Blue Books. The Prime Minister said the other day that some progress had been made in improving the civil government of Egypt. No doubt, something had been done; but how much more might have been done in the 21 months which had elapsed since the battle of Tel-el-Kebir? The irrigation of Egypt had been surveyed and reported upon. Nothing, however, had been actually begun, yet the expenditure of a small sum of money upon irrigation in Egypt would produce immediate results, and would have been productive ere now of considerable profit. The plan for the sale of the Domain lands was settled last year; but it was not carried out, owing to the departure of Lord Dufferin. The same might be said with regard to the indemnities. His right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) had clearly shown that the Government were deeply responsible in the matter of the indemnities. It was not only that their action at Alexandria was the indirect cause of the destruction of the city, but when the Khedive was restored to power he was hand and glove with the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces, and he voluntarily promised to make good the damage. The indemnities might have been settled; but nothing had been done, because of the financial difficulty which was always weighing on the Government of Egypt. Again, as to the military establishments. They had seen how little reliance could be placed upon the forces organized, whether by Baker Pasha or by Sir Evelyn Wood. But the time was rapidly approaching when Sir Evelyn Wood, and all the officers who took service under him, would relinquish their appointments. They only engaged to serve the Egyptian Government for two years, and that period would come to an end at the close of the present year. In this respect there was a difficulty in store for the Government. How were they going to replace Sir Evelyn Wood and his officers? Certainly, some officers had been enlisted and sent out within the last few weeks; but the confusion in the Egyptian Army would be very great in the course of a few months, unless some real steps were taken to avoid it. He felt that until that was done the withdrawal of our forces would not only be impossible, but absurd. With regard to the finances generally, they had heard that something like an interchange of civilities had taken place between the house of Rothschild and the Government. If that was done the other day, why could it not be done six months ago? If Mr. Vincent was coming to London within the next week to arrange for some further operations, why could not Sir Auckland Colvin have entered into the same negotiations when he was in London last June? He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) thought the house of Rothschild would have been quite as ready to assist the Egyptian Government then as now. The hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) contended that financiers were the enemies of Egypt, and that cotton merchants were its friends. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) believed that cotton-growing and finance were of equal importance to the permanent welfare of Egypt; merchandise, commerce, and finance were essential to Egypt's success. Even now, at the eleventh hour, he would appeal to the Government to make up their mind, and act without reserve in the direction that not only hon. Members who sat on the Opposition side of the House, but, judging from certain speeches which they had made, hon. Gentlemen opposite desired. He wished them to act in accordance with their duties and engagements towards Egypt and the Egyptian people—duties and engagements which were very serious, and could not be evaded. He wished them to act in accordance with the wishes of the vast majority of the people of this country. In doing so they would fulfil the expectation of all rational politicians in Europe without any exception; they would consult the interests of Englishmen both here and in India; and even in reckoning with their own supporters they would see they would gain more credit by following the sagacious advice of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), than by siding with the narrow-mindedness of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), or the cynicism of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere).

MR. M'COAN said, that what, to his mind, was the strongest argument against this Vote—namely, that Egypt could very well afford to meet the expenditure herself—had hardly as yet been touched on. Whatever might be the case in Egypt Proper, it could not be pretended that we had any national interests in the Soudan, and these operations of General Graham must consequently be regarded as undertaken on behalf of Egyptian interests with which we were in no way immediately concerned. *Primâ facie* the cost ought, therefore, to fall on the Cairo Treasury, which, if some very obvious and practicable financial reforms were carried out, would be well able to bear it. Before justifying this statement, however, he begged to avail himself of this opportunity to refer very briefly to some other alleged reforms which the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) and the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had both claimed to have been already achieved by our Agents in Egypt. Thus credit had been taken for great progress in the establishment of the new Native Courts; while the fact was that this reform, the initiative in which was due to the late Khedive, had advanced very little beyond the point at which he left it. Some few Belgian and Dutch Judges were, indeed, now idling about Cairo at large salaries; but not a single one of the proposed new tribunals was yet open. As regards the so-called "Legislative Assembly," projected by Lord Dufferin, and for which great credit had also been taken, he need merely say that that was about the most worthless delusion of the whole. So, too, as to irrigation; Colonel Moncrieff had, indeed, made a survey and report; but not a single mile of new canal had yet been made, nor a mile of even the existing ones cleaned out. The whole irrigating system had been neglected since the deposition of Ismail, and was now in very much worse condition than when he left it. Similarly as to the police; that, to be sure, had been "re-modelled;" but with the result that it was, at that moment, everywhere more inefficient than it had been any time within the past 20 years. And so too, lastly, as regards the prisons. Mr. Clifford Lloyd had, it was true, cleaned out and otherwise improved the state of the gaol in Cairo; but in the interior—at Tantah, Damietta, Rosetta, Mansourah, Assiout, Kenneh, and elsewhere, absolutely nothing had been done in this direction. He could affirm this on the authority of wholly trustworthy information, and it was but right that the truth should be known. But whatever might be the difficulty and failure as yet as regards these various reforms, those to which he desired to call the attention of the Committee were still more important, and, if carried out, would effectually and permanently set right what was the main difficulty and danger in the Egyptian situation—its finances. These were—(1) the Tribute to the Porte; (2) the abolition of the Capitulations; (3) the equalization of the Land Tax; (4) the revision of the Law of Liquidation. As regarded the Tribute, the Committee would, perhaps, remember that this heavy tax on Egypt, for which the Porte had never rendered the least equivalent, originally stood at £376,000 a-year; but, in 1866, was raised to £675,000, in consideration of the Firman which in that year conferred on Ismail Pasha the title of Khedive, and made the succession hereditary to his eldest son. To this was subsequently added another £85,000, for the cession of Massowah and Berbera, raising the black mail now paid to Turkey to a round sum of £760,000 a-year. It was obvious that that was a monstrous payment, extracted from the blood and sweat of a population on whom the Porte had never conferred a benefit, and which there was absolutely nothing but a corrupt personal bargain to justify. This heavy drain should, therefore, be reduced to at least its original figure, and a saving of £384,000 a-year be thus effected. The fact that the Porte had mortgaged the present sum for its Tribute Loan supplied no argument against such an economy, as those who bought the stock of that Loan did so at their own risk, and speculatively took their security with all its "equities." As regarded the Capitulations, if we are to exercise any power over Egyptian Administration, the *raison d'être* for those would be wholly gone. As it was, the immunities which they unjustly conferred on some 100,000 foreigners most seriously affected the Customs, Excise, Land Tax, and many other branches of the Revenue, to which justice could not be done so long as these old checks on Turkish misrule remained in force. With the precedent of the French in Tunis, there should be little difficulty in their abrogation; and if anything like broad and equitable reform was to be effected, that must be done. If it were done, the Revenue might expect to gain at least £250,000 a-year. But, financially, the equalization of the Land Tax was even more important. At present, nearly three-fourths of the whole 4,900,000 acres of tilled land in Egypt, held under the *miri* tenure, paid an average tax of 22*s.* an acre; while more than a fourth, chiefly owned by the Pashas, Beys, and other favourites of the Viceroys—held under what was called the *oushurieh* tenure—paid only an average of 7*s.* an acre. It was under this latter tenure that Nubar Pasha, for instance, held his large estates, which were nearly all the gift of the late Khedive. Well, if that gross injustice to the fellaheen, who paid the higher rate for generally worse land, were redressed by the lower being raised to a level with the higher rate, the demonstrable gain to the Treasury would be above £850,000 a-year. But quite as urgent, and more immediately fructuous, would be a reduction of the interest paid on the bonded Debt under the Law of Liquidation. At present this involved a yearly charge of £3,382,406, exclusive of the interest paid on the Domain and Daira Loans, which were separately dealt with. Well, it was obvious that this was a monstrous charge on a total Revenue of less than £9,000,000 a-year; and the only remedy for it was a reduction of, at least, 1 of the 4 per cent—*plus* a Sinking Fund—now paid on the Unified Stock. This alone, even without touching the Preference Stock, would represent a saving of some £550,000 per annum. For that the increased security, given to the Stock by our presence in Egypt, would be far more than an equivalent; and in view of this there would not, he believed, be any difficulty in effecting the necessary modification of the law under which the existing interest charges were fixed. If, then, these several reforms were effected, it would be seen that, what with economies and new revenue, the resultant gain to the Treasury would roundly exceed £2,000,000 a-year,—a sum more than enough to place Egyptian finance on the very soundest footing, without calling on the British taxpayer for a penny. But these great and fructuous reforms could not be expected so long as the present shilly-shally no-policy of Her Majesty's Government was adhered to.

They were possible only under an avowed British Protectorate, and for that and all the blessings it would confer on the Egyptian people they supplied an unanswerable argument.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I only rise for the purpose of making two observations which will not be long — neither one nor the other. The first observation I wish to make is, that I do not understand the new policy of silence taken up by Her Majesty's Government. I am quite sure that the speech of my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton), at the opening of the debate to-night, was well worthy of an answer; also the speech which followed by an old Colleague of the Government (Mr. W. E. Forster), every word of which must have gone to the heart of the Government, and must have been a warning to them that they must take great care what they are doing, if they mean still to guide the Councils of this great nation. That right hon. Gentleman touched upon the subject of Khartoum, and upon the suggested advent to power of Zebehr Pasha, and the consequent increase in the Slave Trade, which is a matter much more likely to touch the feelings of every Englishman than any of those stories of Bulgarian atrocities of which we heard so much a few years ago. This policy of silence is to my mind most wonderful. I do not know whether any Members of the Government were present when the hon. Gentleman the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) made his speech; but, whether or not, that speech is also one which requires to be answered, and which must be answered before the debate closes. This policy of silence, this policy of retiring from the debate before they have extricated themselves from the position in which they find themselves, is a new policy. When this debate began last Thursday, both the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) and the Prime Minister said they would make short speeches, as they would, in all probability, have to speak again in the course of the debate. The noble Marquess most faithfully kept his promise, and his speech was short; but the Prime Minister as faithfully forgot his promise, and his speech was long; but, at all events, I think we are entitled to ask that before this debate closes we may have that further statement from the Government which we were promised when the debate was opened, especially considering the speeches which have been made on this side of the House and the important speeches which have come from, at least, two Members on the other side in the course of this evening's discussion. It is difficult to account for the silence of the Government. I wonder whether it is because they are not agreed. We have often charged them with being disagreed in the Cabinet; but that charge has always been denied, although, in the long run, events have always proved the charge to be well founded. After a charge of this kind has been made, we always find that some Member of the Cabinet drops out of it. On this very Egyptian Question, one of its most important Members left the Cabinet. That right hon. Gentleman left them the very moment the bombardment of Alexandria took place, because, as he said, he considered their policy had been wrong from the very beginning, and that he could no longer go with them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), to whom I refer, left the Cabinet, and when he took that course of action, you may depend upon it there were other Members of the Cabinet very much of his way of thinking. There are, very probably, Members of the Cabinet who still agree with the right hon. Gentleman, although they have not left their Colleagues. The Government say they represent the action of the Liberal Party as a whole; but we know that, on this matter, the Liberal Party is disagreed, and that there are Members of the extreme Radical Party in the Cabinet—we have every reason to believe, indeed, that the Cabinet are by no means agreed as to the policy that is to be pursued. Is that the reason of their silence, then, or is it because, as they say, they have so often explained their policy that it is no use repeating it over and over again? Only the other day, the Prime Minister said he had repeated the policy of the Government, and explained it so often, that he thought he required the indulgence of the House in venturing to repeat it again; and the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), in "another place," has said that as the Government had repeated their policy 16 or 17 times, he must decline to repeat it again. But, if they have so often repeated their policy, they have never yet explained it to the satisfaction and to the intelligence of the country. It so happens that the Members of the Government have spoken not only inside, but outside this House; and their voices have been weakened, in attempting to explain their policy, by the fact that there has been such a wide difference between their statements—even the explanations we have had, with all the eloquence and ingenuity of the Prime Minister himself, have been nullified by the widely different explanations which have been given in "another place." Let us inquire what really is the policy of the Government—let us examine it for one moment; and I now here come to my second point, on which I will detain the House for a very few minutes. From the speeches we heard on Thursday night, we may be able to gather what is the policy of the Government, and where it is that we differ so essentially from them; and that is the point I want to accentuate to-night. The Prime Minister, in the speech in which he introduced the Reform Bill, said he would have to consider the question affirmatively and negatively. I should like to take these very words of his in considering this question of the policy of the Government. Let us consider what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman negatively, and what has fallen from the Government, affirmatively, and I think we shall see what is the feeling of the Government and how the feeling of the Opposition—which I believe to be the feeling of the country—differs from that of the Government. Let us take the negative side first. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman who brought forward this Motion (Colonel Stanley), in a speech which it was not difficult to understand, for the reason that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke as plainly as a man could speak, has given his view of what the policy of the Opposition would be; and the Prime Minister could not help acknowledging that such was the case, because he said—"We have heard in it something like a clear and comprehensive plan arrived at by the speeches of the Opposition, and we have this advantage—that we are and desire to be at distinct issue with regard to their policy so far as we can discern it." I am glad that those words were spoken. I am glad that now, after all the taunts that have been thrown out, to the effect that we had no opinions, and never suggested a policy, and had nothing to put before the country, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, than whom there can be no better judge, says he is at distinct issue with us as to our policy. The sooner the country knows that the better; for it is no use our saying "We find fault with your policy" unless we have one of our own to suggest. I am quite ready to meet the point as to our policy; but it has been already met by my right hon. and gallant Friend. We have it now, on the authority of the Prime Minister, that he discerns what it is, and that the Government are at distinct issue with it. Let there be no mistake about that. Now we come to another sentence of the Prime Minister's. He goes on discussing the speech of my right hon. and gallant Friend, and says—

> "We cannot enter with advantage on the consideration of a policy for Egypt Proper, until we are enabled in some degree to close this chapter in the Soudan, and especially the military chapter."

I do not quite know whether that means that the policy of the Government is to change, because of the events which have happened in the Soudan, or not. The Prime Minister does not express himself on that point; but he goes on to say—

> "The right hon. and gallant Gentleman is under no such difficulty—he has got his plan cut and dry, and he has told us what it is. It is that the Egyptian Government should be swept clean away; it is that the Khedive may be maintained, or shall be maintained, as a puppet in the hands of the British authorities."

Well, I should like to ask what the Khedive is at the present moment; I should like to know what power the Khedive has? If he expresses a single wish, you say it shall not be carried out; if one of his Ministers disagrees with the Minister you have placed under him as Under Secretary, you say that Under Secretary is to have the power, and the Minister is to be dismissed, and you dismiss him accordingly. You say—"The political, military, judicial, and financial government of Egypt is to be conducted not only in word, but in fact, on an English plan." What is the position of the Egyptians in Egypt—have they any part or parcel in this policy? They have an Army; but can they stir without our advice or direction? When you come to judicial matters, have you not destroyed all the elements of justice that were to be found in the country, and have you not set up your own Courts and Judges to administer the judicial system in submission to dictates from England? And as to finance, do you believe that the Egyptian Government, as a Government, can spend one single shilling without your leave and approval? We might suppose that England had assumed the Government of Egypt; but that is what the Prime Minister said Her Majesty's Ministers would not do. But that is exactly what you have done in actual fact, only that you will not acknowledge it. You have destroyed the Government of Egypt; you have absolutely annihilated the Army; you have, to use your own words, "dismissed and shattered" the Cabinet of the Khedive; you will not allow any of his Ministers to have the slightest authority in the Cabinet or elsewhere without your permission; and yet you say that all this is what you will not do—you will not assume the Government of the country. That is the negative side of what we find; now let us come to the affirmative side, and see how far you can go along with us, and where it is that we differ from you. Before, however, I enter upon that, I must refer once more to the reasons the Prime Minister gave for not assuming openly this power which he exercises actually. He said it

> "Would be a gross breach of the public law of Europe. I hope this country will well consider . . . . before it undertakes the government in Egypt of a Mahommedan people."

As to the breach of the public law of Europe, what have you done with the Khedive? You have, in the first place, shattered his Government; you have, in the next place, absolutely changed the relations on which he stands towards his Suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey; you have forced him to give up the greater part of his Empire, and to withdraw from it—and when I say the greater part, I mean in size, not in importance. What more can you do to degrade that Sovereign in the eyes of his people, and how can you say that, if assuming the actual Government is a gross breach of the public law of Europe, you have not committed that breach? Now let us come to the affirmative side of the right hon. Gentleman's policy. The Prime Minister said—

> "The right hon. and gallant Gentleman"—meaning my right hon. and gallant Friend—". . . . made an appeal to us . . . . entreating us to remain in Egypt until our work is done. If there is one declaration more than another that we have reiterated until the House must be sick of hearing of it, it is that very declaration, and it now comes out as the climax of a great Opposition speech, addressed to us in total forgetfulness of the language which we have used so often and so freely that it requires a special petition for the indulgence of the House if one were to attempt to use it again."

["Hear, hear!"] Oh, yes. Hon. Gentlemen cry "Hear, hear!"—they cheer "until our work is done." But let us have the issue raised a little more clearly. The question is, what is your work? The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), 13 months ago, took it upon himself to say your work would be over in six months; but your work has not begun. The Prime Minister, at the end of last Session, said he hoped that within six months there would not be a British soldier left in Egypt. ["No, no!"] Well, some Member of the Government said it—either the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State for War. Your work had not begun when you made these declarations. When we come to the great feast on the Lord Mayor's Day, we find an announcement made to an astonished and silent gathering of citizens, to the effect that your work was done, and that the order had been given for the troops to retire. Why, I say, at that time, your work had not begun. In spite of your want of foresight, you must have known, from the statements of your Agents, what the danger before you was, and yet you did not dare to face it. You knew that Parliament was to meet in February, and that you had given a pledge, as far as you could, to your supporters below the Gangway, which pledge you could not redeem, but which you did not care at that moment to disavow. Circumstances compelled you to refrain from any attempt at withdrawing the British troops before the meeting of Parliament. This is where our difference lies. I have ventured to speak over and over again on this point, and I venture to repeat before the face of the Committee what I have said over and over again, that you have never openly recognized and acknowledged your responsibilities. You have done what events have forced you to do; but you have been ashamed of telling the world what your responsibilities are, and of acting up to them. You have been content to call things by wrong names; and, if I may so say, to play false with yourselves. I will quote a few sentences which fell from a Member of the Government in "another place." I have the more right to do so because they refer to something which was said by myself. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in "another place," said an obligation had fallen on us by the course of events, and referred to something I had said to the effect that we were occupying Egypt, and that we did not mean to annex Egypt, or to remain in permanent occupation of it; but that it would be an act of treachery to Europe, to Egypt, and to ourselves, if we withdrew our troops before there was a reasonable prospect of a suitable Government being set up. I dare say I used words very like those; but I added a sentence that should also have been quoted by the noble Earl, showing my notion of what the responsibility of the Government was. I added that they should state openly and in the face of day—"Here we are and here we intend to remain—we are the only people who are the Government of Egypt—it is perfectly useless setting up the Khedive as a Government, and Secretaries of State, with Under Secretaries under them, so that you are not responsible for the acts of those Secretaries, unless you choose to be." I said it was useless to set up Egyptian Ministers whom you could turn away at a moment's notice if they did not do what you wanted them to do, and I asked if it was your intention to support your own Ministers against those of the Khedive, why did you not acknowledge it at once? The real evil is that you have been always putting before the people of Egypt the provisional character of your power and responsibility in their country, and that you have unnecessarily accentuated that fact. You have led the people of Egypt to believe, you have led the people of Europe and the Mahdi to believe, that your policy is to scuttle out of Egypt the moment you can get out of it with credit to yourselves. This is where we entirely differ from you; we do not want to call it ugly names; but where our policy is really distinct from yours is in the fact that we hold England to be responsible for the Government of Egypt, while you do not. We say you have made her responsible—that it is in consequence of your acts that this responsibility rests with us. If the people of Egypt are left to believe that six months from January, 1883, six months from August, 1883, or six months from now—March, 1884 — we are going to retire from Egypt, how can you possibly imagine that any of the tribes or the people in that country will rally round your standard? How can you expect them to be with you, when they know that within six months they may be deserted by you, and that the people, in opposition to whom they have taken up arms under the British flag, may fall upon them and punish them for what they have done? If they have read the history of the past few unfortunate years, they may know well enough what penalty they may have to pay for rallying round our standard; they may know that the tribes who helped us in Afghanistan suffered severely in consequence, and that a similar fate attended those South African tribes who rendered us assistance. The present Government in South Africa did not remember the old precept so intensely valuable and necessary for Governments to remember—namely, that if you require the help of your neighbour you must not disappoint him. Then there is another question before us. You have ruined Egypt; you have brought her at the present moment almost down upon her knees; and the question is, how is she to be got up again and revived? She should be revived just as Ireland ought to be revived, by restoring confidence and inducing capital to flow into the country—by making people believe that if they invest their money in the country they will be quite sure it will be safe. The Natives know perfectly well that the Government of Egypt is in your hands, and they should know that you are going to keep it until you see that it is safe and firm. Prosperity will then be restored; but if you go dangling before the eyes of Egypt the prospect that in this six months the country will be evacuated, or in that six months you will have retired, you will not get anyone to invest a single shilling in the country. In this we see the fundamental difference between our policy and yours. You are afraid of the Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway. You are afraid of their threats. My right hon. and gallant Friend used a simile which I thought a very good one; you are like a man who always has his beard over his shoulder, looking to see who is following him. We are not, and that is the difference between our policy and yours; and in that policy we believe the country is on our side, and I am certain that if you want to get out of Egypt with honour and credit to this country you will have, sooner or later, to adopt this policy which we have put before you. Do not say it is your policy—it is not. The Prime Minister understood this well enough, for he said—"That is exactly what we will not do;" and that is the difference between us. One word before I sit down as to the Soudan. No doubt this question of the Soudan is a difficult and delicate one; but there is no doubt about it that the difficulty is of your own creating. No one can possibly doubt that after reading the Blue Books. If you had given advice on your own responsibility; if you had followed out Lord Dufferin's policy—if Lord Dufferin had remained in Egypt, you would never have had one of the calamities which have occurred. It is because you withdrew Lord Dufferin from Egypt and turned away from his policy that all these difficulties have come upon you—difficulties from which you do not know how to extricate yourselves. How are we situated at this moment? You have this distinct warning from your own trusted officer—that it would be a heavy blow on the authority of the Khedive if you withdraw from the Soudan; that there is a fanatical population there which would be a great terror to Egypt; and that you would have to keep a powerful force outside Egypt Proper in order to restrain that fanatical population in Upper Egypt. There was another matter which always impressed itself strongly on my mind—namely, that the population of Upper Egypt is also fanatical, and that their rising was added to enormously by the disaster which occurred to Hicks Pasha. I read in a letter from either your own officer, or from a newspaper correspondent, a description which impressed itself upon me very forcibly. The writer said—

> "You talk of erecting fortifications either in Assouan or somewhere else, and you talk about placing guns and armies there; but you might as well use fortifications and armies and guns to exclude the cholera from Egypt, as to keep out the influence of the Mahdi."

The influence of the Mahdi will be felt inside your fortifications, and that is what you will have to deal with; you will have to face the enmity of the population inside Egypt Proper, as well as of Upper Egypt, as the result of withdrawing from the Soudan. General Gordon has given you a note of warning which you must not neglect. He has told you distinctly that the emissaries of the Mahdi are, at the present moment, engaged in raising the tribes between Berber and Khartoum. He has told you distinctly that it is not owing to the disaffection of the tribes that they are doing this, but because of the forecast you have unwisely published of your policy of abandoning the Soudan before you have taken proper precautions for its good government. General Gordon is a man whom you have trusted entirely in this matter; that is his opinion. It is the opinion of the officer in whose hands you have placed yourselves; and it should, therefore, receive the greatest consideration from you. An hon. Friend of mine the other day pointed out that General Gordon, in his first despatch, expressed amazement at the fact that you had determined upon abandoning the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, who answered, accused my hon. Friend of not having read through the despatch, or through another despatch, in which that sentence was qualified; but the right hon. Gentleman forgot that the qualifying words were words not warning you against the abandoning of the Soudan, but saying—

> "It is my strong opinion you cannot but help Egypt to retain that part of the Soudan which has not been already taken from her."

That is a very different thing. In this matter of the Soudan, unless the Government act promptly, the victory of General Graham will go for nothing, and affairs will be in a worse condition practically than that which they were in before. The Government must at once announce their intention of remaining in Egypt until they obtain their object. I do hope they will take these things to heart, and that, at all events, they will break this policy of silence to which I have referred. I hope they will explain, as far as they can, the conversation that took place between General Gordon and our Consular Agent at Khartoum. I cannot expect right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite me to go down on their knees and recant all they have said, and reverse all they have done; but I can assure them the country expects that in the future they will act with firmness, and that they will give up this policy of waiting on events, of drifting, of having no policy at all. The country expects that they will rally, and put before themselves the facts as they stand, and will recognize at once, and proclaim to the world, that we are practically and really the Governors of Egypt, and intend to remain so as long as we believe it to be to the interests not only of England, but of the civilized world, and of Egypt herself. I see the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) is about to rise. I am glad of it, as I was afraid this policy of silence was going to continue through the whole night. If any observations of mine may draw from the noble Marquess anything he would not otherwise have said I shall not have spoken in vain.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) has concluded his observations by referring to the policy of silence which he says Her Majesty's Government have adopted during this debate. I think I can very easily explain what has actuated Her Majesty's Government in not obtruding themselves in great numbers on the attention of the Committee. The debate was practically opened by the speech—of which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken in not too high terms—of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley). That speech was answered, as the right hon. Gentleman has admitted, very fully by my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government. The remainder of the debate during last Thursday night did not appear to us to be such as to call for any further reply from any Member of the Government; and it was our strong belief, as I stated at the time on the Motion for Adjournment, that, so far as the public interest was concerned, and without any detriment to the public interest, the debate might have been very well suffered to conclude on that evening. Those among us whose fate it was to attend the greater part of that evening saw the manifest and evident difficulty with which the debate was kept alive at all. ["Oh, oh!"] We saw that, at one time, the Benches opposite were occupied by only two or three Gentlemen, and we saw the active efforts made by the hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. Winn) to induce hon. Members to rise. On the urgent representation of hon. Gentlemen opposite that there were numerous hon. Gentlemen who desired to continue the debate we assented to the adjournment. It had been intimated, I believe, to hon. Members who sit opposite that if they deemed it to be incumbent upon them to take any great part in the prolongation of the debate, it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to occupy any considerable time of the Committee in repeating declarations and explanations that had already been given. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) has said that the Prime Minister has admitted that the policy of the Opposition had been distinctly laid down in the speech of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire, and that we are now diametrically opposed. I cannot recollect, during the progress of the debate, that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, or any of his Colleagues, or any hon. Gentleman on this side, has supported the policy which was enunciated in that speech with which this debate was opened; and the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) himself, in the observations he has just made, has not so much attempted to support the particular line of policy laid down by his right hon. Colleague, as to endeavour to prove that the policy enunciated by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was practically the same policy as that pursued by Her Majesty's Government. Before I sit down I will say a few words, although it is not necessary that I should do so, upon what I conceive to be the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, and the difference between that and the policy proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but, before I proceed to that part of the subject, there are one or two points upon which I should like to make a few observations, and I can promise the Committee that I will do so as shortly as I can. I am indebted to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Stanley) for having pointed out to me that I had, perhaps, made an omission in my opening remarks in not having made any reference to the gallant conduct of Sir Gerald Graham and the troops under him in the operations which have just taken place. I did not do that, because I had already spoken of that in the few observations I made in reply to Questions on the first day after the engagement at El Teb. I took the very earliest opportunity of expressing the sense which the Government and I myself had of the exertions made by all who were concerned—both by the military authorities in Egypt and by General Graham—of the excellence of the dispositions made by the officers and troops engaged, and of the gallant conduct they had displayed, and the admirable manner in which they had carried out the operations. It did not, therefore, occur to me that it was necessary, on a merely formal occasion, to repeat the acknowledgments I had already made, as I thought sufficiently, on that occasion. On Thursday evening the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) also criticized some of the arrangements which had been made with regard to the operations between Suakin and Tokar, and I was surprised to hear him blame the military authorities for not having despatched, as a portion of the force, a regiment of the Army commanded by Sir Evelyn Wood. That was a matter which, in our opinion, was of the very highest importance in relation to the success of these operations. It must be remembered that Sir Evelyn Wood's Army is not only an untried army, but is also an extremely young army. It has only been organized for a period almost under one year, and that the operations about to be conducted by General Graham were of a very trying and a very difficult character. We were ignorant of the exact numbers of the force we should have to deal with; but we knew it was one of a warlike and fanatical spirit. The peculiar dispositions which would have to be employed made it necessary that all portions of the force should be competent, and that we should be risking a reverse to the British arms, which might have been fatal not only in its immediate consequences, but in ulterior results, if we had trusted any part of the success of the operations to troops which had not been thoroughly tried. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and also, I think, the hon. and gallant Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher), referred to-night to some details of the Supplementary Estimate I am now asking the Committee to vote. I think it will, perhaps, be convenient that we should postpone any minute discussion of those details until we have an opportunity of discussing them on the general Army Estimates and the general Votes; but I may, perhaps, mention that the manner in which the Supplementary Estimate, Vote 12, which has called forth most criticism, is composed, in addition to the Egyptian War Expenditure, briefly stated, is as follows. We ask for £40,000 out of £122,000, in order to defray charges which are outstanding on the Vote of Credit 1882-3. Of that amount, £25,000 is for tents supplied for the expedition by the Indian Government. Further, we ask for £30,000 to replace stores issued to the Egyptian Government; and we also ask for £50,000, which is the rough estimate of the value of the stores sent to Suakin. These stores have been issued from the Reserve in Egypt, and they have been replaced by the purchase and manufacture of stores, representing as nearly as possible the stores sent out. These stores have been distributed as fairly as possible, and a rough estimate of them has been included in Vote 12; for instance, rifles and ammunition sent out have been replaced by the purchase and manufacture of a large quantity at home.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER: I asked about the charge of £13,000 for forage.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A large portion of all these items is due to the necessity of providing for the expenses of the Army of Occupation in Egypt during the whole 12 months, instead of for six months, for which the original Estimate was taken. The Vote has been exceeded; but no real practical charge came on the country, because the Capitation Grant allowed by the Egyptian Government paid those excesses. But, going from the details of this Supplementary Estimate, I should like to say one or two words in reference to the Amendment before the Committee. My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) moves to reduce the sum by a considerable amount, which practically includes all the expenditure in respect to the occupation of Egypt and the recent military expedition. I understand him to move this reduction principally on the ground that this expedition, if for the advantage of anyone, is for the benefit of the Egyptian Government, and therefore ought to be paid for by the Egyptian Government. My hon. Friend admits that it is impossible, or not easy to make the Egyptian taxpayer pay more than he does at present, and that this expense ought to be met either by a reduction of the Turkish Tribute or by the bondholders. I am not prepared to say that, in principle, I am very much disposed to go contrary to the contention of my hon. Friend; but the Committee must look not at what is desirable now, but at what it is possible to do. My hon. Friend is as well aware as I am that the Egyptian Government, and also the arrangements under the Law of Liquidation, are international obligations which cannot be abrogated by a stroke of the pen, by the action of the British Government, or by a vote of this House. I am very far from saying that it may not be necessary ultimately for the Government to propose to the parties who are interested some modification of the Law of Liquidation. Through recent events Egypt has incurred many losses and many expenses. It is possible that the necessity for a prolonged occupation by our military forces, or the re-organization of her military forces, may involve her in still further expenses; and it is also possible that the reforms that are being introduced may, in the first instance, cause some increase in the Public Expenditure. All these things may increase the annual Expenditure of Egypt to an extent which will be incompatible with the maintenance, in its present form, of the Law of Liquidation; and I am far from denying that this question will be a proper subject to be raised by the English Government; but it is one which must be raised in a regular manner, and on a consideration of the whole position, in concert with the European Powers. It will be a question which will occupy considerable time, and involve considerable negotiation; and if it is undertaken at all, it would be desirable to deal with it as a whole, and not in an incidental way upon a small sum such as that we are asking the Committee to vote on the present occasion. If my hon. Friend is somewhat premature in asking that this great question of the financial condition of Egypt should be incidentally decided upon a Vote in Committee, I think the right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley), and other hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House, are also somewhat premature in asking the Government, at this time, for a precise and definite explanation as to the exact arrangements which are to be made in the future for the garrisoning of Suakin and other Red Sea ports. That is also a small part of a very much larger question. I fully admit that the whole of the military arrangements in Egypt may require—and, indeed, will require—further consideration. The conditions of the problem are, to a certain degree—and perhaps to a considerable degree—qualified by the decision which has been forced by circumstances upon Egypt to evacuate the military occupation by her garrisons of the Soudan. It is possible and probable that the Government of Egypt will have to make arrangements for the defence of the Southern Provinces of Egypt against invasion by warlike tribes, of a different character from those arrangements which were necessary when it was supposed to be in the power of Egypt to occupy and to hold the Soudan. And it is also possible that the fanatical spirit aroused by the success of the religious movement may cause some disturbance and trouble in Egypt Proper, and that garrisons of a somewhat different character from those which were originally contemplated will be required. I am perfectly willing to admit that there appear to be some recent events which throw some doubt on the value of the fighting capacity of Sir Evelyn Wood's Army as it is at present composed. We have asked Sir Evelyn Wood and Sir Evelyn Baring to send us the fullest information on that subject at the earliest possible date, and it is a question which must occupy the earliest consideration; but I submit to the Committee that this question of the military arrangements for the defence of the frontier and the interior of Egypt itself is one which must also be looked at as a whole, and that it would be premature on the part of Her Majesty's Government at this period to declare in what way the military garrisons which are to hold the Red Sea ports are to be ultimately constituted. Some question has been raised by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), as to the expediency of the policy of holding the Red Sea ports at all. The noble Lord appeared to express some doubt as to whether the recent military operations in the neighbourhood of Suakin had been intended for the protection of the Red Sea ports; and he seemed to suggest that they were really intended to intrench Egypt in the position in which we had announced we did not think she should or could be —that is, of holding the Soudan. The hon. Member for Newcastle expressed some doubt as to whether the British Government should make itself responsible for the protection of the Red Sea ports. Perhaps it may be sufficient to say that no part of the policy of Her Majesty's Government than that of assisting the Egyptian Government in the protection of these ports was more fully explained and stated in the debates which had previously taken place, or more fully acquiesced in by all parts of the House. It appears to me that there are several reasons why it is essentially necessary that the British Government should take care that those ports are held either by a civilized Power, or by a Power which is under the influence of civilization. In the first place, I consider it a matter of importance to British interests that the ports of the Red Sea should not be in a position which would tempt any other European Power to occupy them. We know very well that there are other European Powers which would not be averse to the occupation of the ports on the Red Sea. It appears to me that the importance of the Red Sea, as being on our line of communication with our Indian Possessions, makes it of great importance that no other European Power should be established in any of these ports. Further, it is of great importance, in reference to the prevention of the Slave Trade, that these ports should be in the possession of either a civilized Power, or of a Power under the influence of civilization. If, as we hope and trust, satisfactory arrangements are made on the Nile, and in Egypt itself, which will preclude the Nile routes being used for that traffic, the only route for the export of slaves from the interior of Africa will be by the Red Sea ports, and it is by the exercise of control over those ports that that traffic may be most effectually checked and put an end to. Finally, in the interests of the Soudan, and in the interests of civilization, it appears to me very necessary that these ports should not be in the hands of a barbarous Power, such as the Arab Tribes, which have lately been menacing it. Whatever may be the Power which is to hold the interior of the Soudan—whether it be the Egyptian Government or the Native Sultans, or whether, as some hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to desire, this country, or someone supported by this country—it is certain that, sooner or later, after more or less prolonged disturbance, trade will revive, and the trade of the Soudan must always go to Suakin, and probably Suakin will always be the principal route of that trade. The only way by which we can hope that the real and the best influences of civilization will ever penetrate to the interior of the Soudan is through the medium of trade; and it is in the interests of the Soudan itself and of civilization that the principal ports of exit for the trade should be in the hands of a Power which is under the influence of civilization. Under these circumstances, I think there is ample reason, without any reference to the interior of the Soudan at all, why the Government of England should have given assistance to the Egyptian Government in defending the Red Sea ports, and especially Suakin, against the threatened attacks by the Arab Tribes. As to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan itself, the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), as I understood him, regretted the decision which Her Majesty's Government had come to, of recommending the Egyptian Government to evacuate the whole of the Soudan. I do not know that it is necessary that I should follow the hon. Member at any length into that part of his observations, because he admitted that the views he held were not fully shared by the responsible Members of the Party to which he belongs. In my opinion, there is overwhelming evidence that the Egyptian Government has done nothing for the civilization of the Soudan, and has done nothing for the protection of the country. General Gordon had arrived at a conclusion long before recent events took place. His firm opinion before he left this country was that the insurrection which had broken out in that country was an insurrection justified by the misgovernment of the Soudan by the Egyptian Government. The hon. Member said that good and efficient Government had been established in some Provinces in the Soudan by a European Power. I believe that is the case; but I do not think the hon. Member showed, and I do not think it is possible to show, that the Government to which he referred had received any real assistance or support in the successful Administration it had established in those Provinces of the Soudan from the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Government did nothing to support that Power; on the contrary, it was the Egyptian Government which made the task more difficult than it otherwise would have been; and I know nothing that will prevent the exertions of such men being continued effectually, and perhaps more effectually, under some system of autonomy, than the nominal rule of the Egyptian Government.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I did not mention the Egyptian Government at all. I advocated the restoration of order under a British Governor General, with the consent of, and co-operation with, the Sovereign Power.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The hon. Member advocates the appointment of a British Governor General of the Soudan; but I think, in advocating that policy, the hon. Member stands almost alone, and I do not know that there is anyone in this House who would support the proposition that the British Government should make itself responsible for the good government of the whole of the Soudan. Sir, the hon. Member has referred to Kassala, and the other garrisons, with their trading populations; and he asks, how are you to withdraw those large populations which have grown up under the Egyptian Government? General Gordon tells us that these garrisons are perfectly secure from any attack which might be made against them, and that there is not the slightest reason to fear that the garrisons and the Egyptian officials may not be withdrawn. I do not see, after the withdrawal of the garrisons, that the trading populations will have anything to fear. The problem which General Gordon has to solve is the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops and the Egyptian officials, who have made themselves detested, and justly detested, by the people whom they have oppressed. The peaceful trading population have, I believe, nothing to fear from the people of the country; and, indeed, it has long been known that there are a considerable number of that class who intended remaining at Khartoum, whether the Egyptian garrison were withdrawn from that point or not. Then, Sir, I am not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), should have referred to the statement which appeared recently in the newspapers, as to Zebehr Pasha being appointed Governor of Khartoum, in succession to General Gordon. Sir, the objections to such an appointment must be obvious to the Committee; and I can assure the Committee that no one could have been more surprised than Her Majesty's Government when the first suggestion of such a course was made, and when it first appeared that General Gordon was contemplating its adoption. I need not take up the time of the Committee in repeating the obvious objections that there would be to such an appointment; but I desire to point out that the more obvious those objections are, and the more they are such objections as would be likely to occur to a person in General Gordon's position, the more necessary it is that Her Majesty's Government should satisfy themselves fully as to the reasons which have induced him to make such a suggestion; as to the reasons which have induced him to think that Zebehr Pasha, under the circumstances, would pursue an altered course of conduct, and what are the certain guarantees which, in General Gordon's opinion, render it safe in the interests of humanity that such an appointment should be made. We have, of course, asked from General Gordon full explanations upon that point; and, as soon as they have been received and considered, the Government will lose no time in coming to a decision. But what I want to point out to the Committee is, that we owe so much to General Gordon, who has gone on an expedition of an extremely dangerous, difficult, and delicate character, and who is known not only to be opposed to slavery—not only a man of ordinary humanity, but one who has devoted the greater part of his life, and is well known to be willing to sacrifice it, in the cause of humanity, and in protecting the welfare of the people in whom he takes so much interest—that it would not be just to General Gordon, and the character of the mission he has undertaken on behalf of the Government, to set aside summarily any suggestions he should make until Her Majesty's Government have before them all the reasons which have induced him to make them. But I can assure the Committee that the suggestion has not received the assent of Her Majesty's Government; on the contrary, we have expressed our surprise, and the strong objection we feel to make any such appointment. We are most anxious that General Gordon should, as rapidly as possible, complete his task and return from Khartoum, and from the dangerous and critical position which, of course, we are aware that he occupies so long as he remains there. It would be far better, in our opinion, that General Gordon should remain a longer time to complete the work himself, than that he should receive the assistance of, or leave the succession to, an objectionable agent. All that I can state further is, that, on a matter of such cardinal importance, Her Majesty's Government will lose no time, when full information is before them, in coming to a decision, and also in announcing that decision to the House in a form in which the House will be enabled to pronounce judgment upon it. Sir, we have been called upon over and over again, in the course of this discussion, to make some further declaration as to our policy in Egypt itself. The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Sir R. Assheton Cross) is, I am sorry to say, not satisfied with the declaration of the policy laid down; he is not satisfied that we shall stay in Egypt until our work is done. He says we do not understand the completion of our work in the same sense as he and his hon. Friends understand it, and he refers to the speeches which have been made by myself and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, as to the possible limit and character of our occupation, as showing that we have no idea of what the work to be accomplished is. Sir, I have already made some observations in my speeches in this House and in the country upon this subject, and I will not weary the Committee by repeating them. But I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he was inaccurate in saying that my right hon. Friend had announced his intention of immediately withdrawing the British garrisons from Egypt. All that my right hon. Friend said was, that the Government thought the time had come when they might possibly effect a further reduction of the garrisons; and I firmly believe that, in the condition in which Egypt was, if these events in the Soudan had not occurred, the presence of 2,000 or 3,000 troops in Egypt, for the purpose of supporting our Agent and the British officers by whom he is assisted, would have been amply sufficient for the maintenance of that security which we as well as the right hon. Gentleman opposite desire. The right hon. Gentleman says we do not understand what our work really is. We admit, as far as it is possible to admit, that our duty is to remain in Egypt until a stable Government is established there, which can rest upon its own foundation, and which will inspire confidence not only in the people of that country, but also in those whose presence is so necessary there as furnishing the capital and the energy requisite for the development of the resources of Egypt. These declarations can only be supplemented either by further words, or further acts. Some have suggested that we should announce our intention of maintaining the occupation—the military occupation—of Egypt for a definite term of years. Sir, that is not a solution of this question which appears to my mind to have in it any elements which would commend it to the judgment of the Committee. It appears to me that any confidence which was based upon such a declaration on the part of Her Majesty's Government would be a confidence which, from the very nature of the declaration upon which it was based, would be one which would materially diminish during the term, and which would in the end totally vanish. It seems to me that there would be far greater confidence and security if the British Government should declare its intention of remaining in Egypt so long, and no longer, than was necessary for the establishment of a firm and stable Government. Then, Sir, it is suggested that there are acts by which Her Majesty's Government may supplement what has been done already. I understand what is first pointed at to be the substitution of Englishmen for Egyptians in the high Offices of State. I doubt very much the wisdom of such a step. I have a strong opinion that, for the immediate and actual purposes of Egyptian administration, such substitution would not be of advantage to the people of Egypt. It is of no use making comparisons between our Government in India and the Government in Egypt. I believe we secure, in the main, a good Government for India; but our officials charged with the Indian Government have the assistance of a trained Civil Service which has been in existence for years, and which, I understand, is conversant with the ordinary Business of the country, and with the wants and necessities of the people. But, in Egypt, if the great Offices of State are placed in the hands of British officials, they have no such Civil Service to their hand as they have in India; and, therefore, I believe that the substitution of Englishmen for Egyptians in every Department of the State would not tend to the immediate advantage or to the improvement of the Administration. And, further, the substitution suggested would have, in our opinion, that great objection which I pointed out when I addressed the House on a former occasion. The government of Egypt by English officials would be the entire exclusion of Egyptians from all positions of trust and responsibility; and it would bring into use a system which would absolutely, and for ever, exclude the possibility of a Native Adminstration. Whenever a system of that kind, resting upon the foundation of British administration in all important Offices of the State, is withdrawn, the whole system must fall away; and, although it may be said that this is only advocated as a temporary arrangement, it is one which from its very nature must, unless it leaves anarchy behind it, be essentially of a permanent character. We are, therefore, not disposed to adopt that policy, if it be the policy which is recommended by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. We fully admit that, so long as our military occupation continues, we are responsible for the main lines of the policy of the Egyptian Government. We admit that we have increased that responsibility by the action which we have thought it necessary to take on a very recent occasion, and that our responsibility is increased by the advice we have given with respect to the Soudan. We fully acknowledge that responsibility; but we believe that we can best discharge it, and best secure to Egypt good adminstration in the present and the future, by availing ourselves of such elements as exist in Egypt, with the hope that those elements may widen, strengthen, and increase until Egypt is capable of being governed by a Native and self-supporting Administration.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, there are two observations of the noble Marquess opposite the Secretary of State for War to which I wish to draw attention. In the first place, the noble Marquess spoke of the prolongation of this debate, and he likewise referred to the character of the discussion on Thursday last. I will not ask now what was the character of that discussion; but I think everyone who has attended to the course of the debate of this evening must feel that there was very good ground indeed for those who asked for another evening on which to continue that discussion. And I think it will be generally felt that the discussion which has taken place this evening, in respect not only of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen on this side, but in respect of those which came from the opposite Benches, including the speech of the noble Marquess himself, has very well justified the lengthened debate which has taken place. I must say that the speech of the noble Marquess does, on more points than one, appear to us to indicate something like a new departure, and to place matters on a different footing from that on which they stood the other night. Sir, there is another point to which I wish to call attention. The noble Marquess said, with reference to more than one matter brought forward, that these were grave questions, which it would not be easy or discreet to discuss upon so limited a point as the amount which we are now asked to vote in the form of a Supplementary Estimate for Army Services. I agree that it is not the most convenient way of discussing our present and future policy in Egypt, to take the discussion on the question of how much money should be given under a Supplementary Vote for Army Services; but, at the same time, I am bound to point out that it was no fault of ours that the discussion should be so taken. We were anxious to challenge the policy of Her Majesty's Government as a whole in what appeared to us to be a legitimate way. My right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) had given Notice of a Motion that would have raised this question in the most legitimate and convenient form, and which would have given us an opportunity for discussing that which we were anxious to discuss. But the Government, availing themselves of the Forms of the House, and declining to give us any other opportunity, forced upon us the discussion in the form in which we were obliged to take it. I should not have made these remarks, had it not been for the observations of the noble Marquess, who complained of our having raised the larger question on so small a basis.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I believe the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I did not complain of the issue being raised on this Vote. I said that several points had been raised which involved very large questions, and that explanations were asked from the Government on what was a very small part of a much larger question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I agree with the noble Marquess, and I say that the reason for this was that we were prevented debating the question in a more convenient form. The position in which we stand is clearly understood by the whole of the Committee. We shall have to pronounce an opinion on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and that Amendment is one which I expect the great body of the Committee will decline to accept. We, at all events, find ourselves unable to accept it; although, at the same time, we do not approve the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in several matters connected with their Egyptian policy. Sir, some advantage has been gained by the form which the Motion of my right hon. and gallant Friend has taken. It is undoubtedly a fact that we have not before us a Division on a matter which involves a Vote of Confidence in the Government; but the mode in which this discussion has been taken has had the effect of setting free the tongues and minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have spoken very freely, and in a way that would not otherwise have been open to them. I do not say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) or the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) would have withheld their opinions had such a Division been before us; but, undoubtedly, their task has been made more easy by the mode in which the discussion has been taken. Sir, what we feel with regard to the position of affairs and the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt is this—that there is very great danger of prolonging a crisis which is of a very serious character, and which may at any moment assume a dangerous development. I cannot help feeling that the present state of affairs in Egypt is extremely critical, and that the manner in which the Government have dealt, and are now dealing, with that state of affairs, has been such as to encourage and increase the difficulties of the situation rather than remove them. We are anxious, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government and the country should realize, as far as possible, the great issues which are involved in this question; we are anxious that they should see how great are the national interests at stake, and to how great a degree the very character of this country is concerned. It is not only a question of interest, however; it is a question of the duties of the country. It appears to me that we sometimes neglect to consider how very great are the duties which the Government, by the course of their policy in Egypt, have taken upon themselves not only *in foro conscientiæ*, but in the eyes of the civilized world, and how serious it will be, as far as our character alone is concerned, if we fail to discharge those duties. Now, it does seem to us that the Government are hardly sufficiently alive to this fact. They do not seem to think that if we fail to accomplish what we have taken in hand, through any unwillingness or misconduct on our part, we shall bring upon ourselves a large amount of well-deserved punishment which no number of eloquent speeches, no tactics in the House of Commons, will enable us to do away with. We stand to be judged by the manner in which we conduct ourselves in this business. Although it is undoubtedly the duty of us all to avoid doing anything that may weaken or embarrass Her Majesty's Government in this matter, yet we ought not to shrink from telling them the truth, or telling them why we think they are going wrong. Now, Sir, we complain that the Government do not tell us all they ought to tell us in regard to their plans. It may be they will say—"The truth is, we do not altogether know what our plans are; we must leave a great deal to the course of events; we cannot tell at present what may be the outcome of these matters." That may, or may not, be true; but, if it be true, it is a very great defect in their position. What is really of importance is that they ought beforehand to know their policy. If they appear to be uncertain of that, they actually increase the difficulty in Egypt itself, and they render nugatory the exertions which they are making to get out of the position in which they stand. How long they are to remain in Egypt is one question. I have no doubt there is great force in what the noble Marquess said about fixing the term, and I am glad to see that in this matter he has advanced from the position which he originally occupied. I have no doubt, in my own mind, that that little sentence of the noble Marquess which he spoke at the beginning of last Session, and to which, perhaps, at the time he attached very little importance, has weighed upon the proceedings in Egypt, and that it has not been forgotten, but has been spread and magnified, and, by producing the impression that the Government are not in earnest, has brought about the very feeling which they are anxious to avoid. Again, the Prime Minister came forward, and, putting words into the mouth of my right hon. and gallant Friend as to what my right hon. and gallant Friend thinks should be done in Egypt, said—"That is exactly what we are determined not to do." Now, Sir, the words which the Prime Minister used—the words which he quoted from my right hon. and gallant Friend—do not very materially differ from what has been told us by the noble Marquess. It may be considered by the Government wise to use such language; but we cannot help thinking that, in using it, they are opening a door by which they themselves can retreat. They are endeavouring to build a bridge by which they may advance or retreat; but they are so careful in the building of the structure, that we can see more of the retreat than the advance. The confidence of the people in the Government, therefore, is shakened, and the spirits of those who are mischievously inclined are raised, and so the evil goes on increasing and increasing. You may say that, having regard to the conduct of the Government—sometimes so particularly scrupulous, sometimes so strangely violent and, as it would seem, unscrupulous—they are at one time straining at a gnat, and at another time swallowing a camel. They have oftentimes to swallow camels because they strain at gnats. They have to meet these difficulties in the largest and most grievous form, just because they have been afraid, or unwilling, or too fastidious to deal and grapple with them properly. You might have stopped all this business in the Soudan, by a little strong language judiciously addressed to the Egyptian Government at the time Hicks Pasha's expedition set out; you might have stopped this miserable business, but you would not do it. What is the reason the Prime Minister gave us for not doing it? He said it would not have been very cordially received by the Egyptian Government, if we had proposed at the moment that they thought they were advancing to victory that they should not advance. I dare say not; but the difficulty then would only have amounted to a little want of cordiality; whereas, now, you have humiliated the Egyptian Government in a way that no Government was ever humiliated before. You see how your reticence or scruples at one moment, brought upon you great difficulty in the end. I ask, what are the obligations that I say we have incurred? What are the obligations you have incurred to Egyyt itself, because that is probably what you have to look at? "You have two obligations," says the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. "You have the obligation to maintain tranquillity in Egypt, and you have also the obligation to maintain the Government of the Khedive; I want to know how far those obligations are consistent one with the other, and, if there is anything inconsistent between them, which is the one which must be considered as the dominant obligation?" No doubt, we are bound to do all that we can to maintain tranquillity in Egypt; but it must be tranquillity not resting upon a force of bayonets or upon overwhelmning military armaments; it must be, as far as possible, tranquillity resting on good government or good administration, and upon a just adherence to all those rules of economy which bring about national prosperity. That is what we desire to see, and no doubt we desire to see that arrived at through the agency of the Khedive and a Native Ministry, if it can be done; but how is that to be done? You can see now, for yourselves, everybody sees for themselves, that it is impossible. If you were to leave the Khedive and his Native Ministry alone, it would be absolutely impossible to secure tranquillity in Egypt. If you withdraw your supporting or your controlling hand, you will run the risk of most serious evils in Egypt, and you will hereafter be called upon to interfere in some violent and unsatisfactory manner. How are we to avoid a misfortune of that kind? It must be by one of two processes; it must be either by strengthening the the Native administration, or it must be by controlling it. Are we going to strengthen it, or to control it? Let us know how that is to be; and, whether we take the one line or the other, whether we try to combine both strength and control, let it be clearly understood that it is upon us that the responsibility rest; that we do not shrink from acknowledging that responsibility; that we declare ourselves prepared to act upon it; and that we shall proceed with all due regard for the feelings and position of those with whom we deal; and that we shall proceed on our own lines, our own responsibility, our own convictions whenever it is necessary so to proceed. Now, Sir, that is where I think we have hitherto somewhat failed. We have failed to make that sufficiently clear; and it is because of that that we have found our difficulties have increased, instead of diminished. Your system, which promised extremely well at one time, the system which, I venture to say, during the time of the late Government and the earlier part of your own experience, promised very well and very fairly—your system now has crumbled in your hands. You see, by the information which we receive each day—such information, for instance, as we received yesterday, to the effect that an Egyptian Minister has had to resign because he could not work with the subordinate whom you have placed practically over him, though nominally under him—you see how much your system has failed. We wish to impress upon your attention the necessity of recognizing and dealing with that state of things; otherwise you will have a state of chronic anarchy; you will absolutely destroy what you have already very much weakened—namely, the principle of authority; you will destroy all confidence in the Government; you will destroy all respect, either for the nominal Rulers whom you are supposed to be supporting, or for yourselves. You will have chronic anarchy, which will spread, not only over the Soudan, not only over the littoral of the Red Sea, where you will have enough on your hands, with that large undertaking which you now seem ready to prepare for, but you will have that anarchy spreading over Lower Egypt itself. The dangers with which we are now beset are very considerable; because, after all, what is our position in Egypt—what is it that we are doing there? How is it that foreign nations generally assented, as they have assented, to our taking this remarkable position upon ourselves? It is upon the assumption, upon the theory, that we are conscious of what we are about, that we have the great object of maintaining the country tranquil, peaceful, and prosperous, and that we have the power, and the will, and the determination to do it. But if you once shake the confidence of foreign nations in your power or your determination, you will raise all those serious questions which the Prime Minister is so very much afraid of raising. It is very likely you will come across all the difficulties about the public law of Europe. You will raise them in the most serious form, if you fail to accomplish that which is the main object you have before you, and for which you have been permitted to remain where you are. Sir, I do not wish to enlarge upon the evil effects which may flow from want of confidence. Everybody admits there is a great work to be done; everybody admits that there are great capacities in Egypt, which may still be developed; and, no doubt, as was said by the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan), a little while ago, Egypt, if she has her resources developed, and if confidence is maintained, may still show that she has great recuperative power, and that she will be able to rid herself of her difficulties, financial and otherwise. But the foundation of all that is that there should be confidence and credit; that there should be confidence that Egypt herself is to be allowed to be quiet, and that she is to be encouraged by another Power to proceed in the path of self-reformation. I do not doubt that the language which the noble Marquess has used to-night is greatly in advance of that which we have heard on former occasions. He has undertaken to do some things from which the Government has hitherto shrunk. I think what he says about our duties on the littoral of the Red Sea goes far beyond what was said by the Prime Minister the other night. If we have brought nothing else out of the Government, we have, at all events, obtained from them a very large advance in regard to the littoral of the Red Sea. Perhaps it is even a larger advance than the noble Marquess himself was quite conscious of when he spoke of the duties that we had in regard to the protection of the Red Sea ports. The Red Sea, I believe, is something like 2,000 miles in length; and if we are to maintain ourselves there for such purposes as those which the noble Marquess spoke of—and I do not say he is wrong—it is a great and serious responsibility which we are taking upon ourselves. And as we take large responsibilities one after another upon ourselves, it is all the more important that we should show that we are serious and in earnest in the matter, and that we are not taking up these responsibilities for a few years or so, but that we are taking them up with the firm intention of carrying out the work before us. If that is so, if that is the spirit in which the Government are acting, all may be well; but I cannot help feeling that we are in a position of considerable anxiety. I fear the time, to which the hon. Member for Orkney pointed, may come when England may be placed in a position which looks a little like retiring from her great place in the front rank of nations. Depend upon it, if that time ever should come, if England should ever wish, or be tempted, to step back from that position into which she is by the force of ages and by her own energies, it will be a time not only of great loss and sorrow and great humiliation for England herself, but it will be a time which will bring great sorrow and misfortune and difficulty to the rest of the world. Her position is not one that concerns herself alone; it is a position which is of importance to the whole civilized world; and I anxiously trust that the spirit which has brought us so far and maintained our great Empire up to this point will not fail us now.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 13; Noes 178: Majority 165.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

Original Question again proposed.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had one or two questions to put, but did not wish to put the House to the trouble of a Division. The account stood thus — Grand total for Egypt, £371,000; repaid by the Egyptian Government, £162,000; net payment by this House in respect to the expedition, £209,000. They were told that £100,000 was on account of the expedition to Tokar, and which, he thought, the English Government were obliged to pay. Perhaps the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) would explain the item of £109,000? He believed the noble Marquess had said that £40,000 was part of the expenses of last year, and that the remainder had yet to be received by the Egyptian Government. If so, his (Sir George Campbell's) objection fell to the ground.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, the explanation was substantially what his hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) had just said. The great portion of the money represented arrears from the Egyptian Expedition in 1882. He could not, however, give the exact figures.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that, on the understanding that the Committee was not called upon to pay any additional sum, he would not propose the Amendment which stood in his name.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY — NAVY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (VOTE FOR THE EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN).

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £147,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for additional Expenditure arising out of Military Operations in Egypt."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped the Government would now consent to report Progress. ["Oh!"] He spoke, he thought, with reason. He had been sitting in the House more attentively than many Members of the Government since 4 o'clock. He hoped they would not now, at 1 o'clock in the morning, be required to enter into a debate upon questions which were of the very gravest importance. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had informed the Committee that the littoral of the Red Sea, which was 2,200 miles in extent, would be held by Her Majesty's Forces. Was that the case or not? ["No!"] The noble Marquess said Her Majesty's Forces were to occupy the littoral of the Red Sea, and it was intimated the other evening that the Navy was to be employed for that purpose. If it was the intention of the Government to employ the Navy in order to hold the littoral of the Red Sea, much more explanation ought to be given to the Committee than could be given at this hour of the morning. Individually, he would be prepared to protest against the landing of blue-jackets and Marines to garrison any of the ports on the coast of the Red Sea. The duties of the Navy were confined to duties afloat, except under circumstances of great emergency and difficulty. The Navy deserved the highest possible credit for the services they had rendered in the course of the operations at Suakin during the last few weeks; they had done their work nobly and well; if the Army had done well, certainly the Navy, under Admiral Hewett, had done equally well. But it was a totally different thing to call upon the Navy to furnish blue-jackets and Marines for garrison duties on the Red Sea Coast. Whether the Naval Forces were to be so employed or not, there had undoubtedly been a declaration of policy this evening to the country and to Parliament which involved very serious and very grave responsibilities. They were told that the whole coast of the Red Sea was to be held by Her Majesty's Forces or by some civilized Power. As he understood that to be a declaration that, directly or indirectly, England was to hold the waters of the Red Sea, time ought to be allowed to the Committee to ascertain by what means and in what way this very large addition to our responsibilities was to be carried out. He begged to move that the Chairman do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. W. H. Smith.)*

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not know whether, on this Motion, I may be allowed to make an explanation. I was extremely unwilling to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), who, I think, made use of a similar expression to that which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. W. H. Smith). I do not think I made any such declaration as has been referred to —namely, that the Red Sea ports are to be held by British Forces, either naval or military. What has been announced is, that Her Majesty's Government would assist in defending the ports of the Red Sea. I stated the reason which, in my opinion, rendered it imperative that that policy should be pursued by Her Majesty's Government. There is no intention, and I trust there will be no intention, of holding any ports on the Red Sea except Suakin, or of remaining there any longer than is necessary. I never used the expression that the Red Sea ports were to be held by this country; therefore I trust the right hon. Gentleman will not think it necessary to press his Motion. He cannot desire that, on the proposal before the Committee, there should be a further discussion of the policy that has been so much debated.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I think the Motion of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) is perfectly justified by the speech of the noble Marquess. What did the noble Marquess say? I quite admit that he did not dwell upon our holding, or any other civilized Power holding, the whole of the Red Sea Coast; but he did declare that certain places on that coast should be held by this country — he said some "civilized Power," which, practically, means this country.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I said not by any other European Power. I said that it is necessary that we should take care that these ports are held by a civilized Power, or a Power under the influence of a civilized Power.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Yes, by a civilized Power, or a Power under the influence of a civilized Power; in other words, either by England, or a Power under the influence of England. Very well, let us see what additional light the speech of the noble Marquess this evening has thrown upon this matter. Only on Thursday last, the Prime Minister used the strongest words he could to express the urgency of an immediate withdrawal of Her Majesty's Forces from these very ports in the Red Sea, including, of course, Suakin, that being the chief of them. This evening the noble Marquess has told us, for the first time, of the doubts Her Majesty's Government entertain as to the efficiency of the Egyptian Army to hold Suakin. I should like to know, and I think the Committee are entitled to know before they vote this sum, how Her Majesty's Government propose that Suakin should be held, if Her Majesty's Forces are to be withdrawn from it as a matter of urgency, and if the Forces of the Egyptian Government, to which the noble Marquess has alluded, are not to be relied upon? It must be, if English soldiers are to go, and Egyptian soldiers cannot be sent, because they cannot be trusted, that the blue-jackets, to whom reference has been made, are to take their place. If that is so, I do think we are entitled to some further discussion of this new phase of the policy of the Government, which has been suggested by the speech of the noble Marquess to-night. I trust, therefore, that my right hon. Friend will persevere with his Motion.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 56; Noes 114: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Original Question again proposed.

Sir JOHN HAY: I rise to move that you, Sir, do now leave the Chair. On the statement we have heard from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, as to the policy of Her Majesty's Government, questions will arise affecting this Naval Vote which, at this hour of the night, it would be impossible to deal with satisfactorily. With this observation I beg to submit my Motion.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir John Hay.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 113: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 31.)

Original Question again proposed.

Captain PRICE said, that earlier in the evening he had given Notice that he should call attention to a matter of great importance as to the embarkation of the Marines in a certain ship for Egypt. It was quite impossible that he could go into the matter at that hour of the night. He could not attempt to do justice to it; therefore he would move that the Chairman report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Captain Price.*)

Mr. ACLAND said, he hoped the Government would not yield to this appeal. He had observed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Dodson) had been in his place up to half-past 12 o'clock on Government nights lately, on purpose to bring in the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. They had been told, and he believed the statement had been accepted, that it was impossible for the Bill to be brought in until the Supplementary Estimates were disposed of. He failed to see how it was that hon. Members could not give their attention to Business now, as they had constantly to do so on other occasions, instead of spending night after night in fighting over Business that they all knew would have to be done, especially when they had been told, two or three night ago, that cattle were dying by hundreds and thousands in the country of foot-and-mouth disease.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to point out to the Government that there really was a great reason why they should adjourn. At the end of the debate, the noble Marquess made a new departure in the policy, in the absence of the Prime Minister, who was, unfortunately, detained elsewhere—probably in consequence of the declaration the noble Marquess was going to make. Such being the case, he really did not think they ought to continue the discussion on Egyptian matters without the presence of the Prime Minister. His hon. and gallant Friend (Captain Price) was perfectly justified in the proposal he had made, and it was to be hoped he would persevere in it.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he had heard two reasons given for the postponement of the Vote. One, which he would notice first, was given by his hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Captain Price), who had alluded to a very small point—namely, whether certain Marines ought or ought not to have been sent in a certain ship from Malta to Alexandria. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ventured to say that five minutes would exhaust all that it was possible to say on that subject on one side or the other. Then the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) said the Vote ought to be postponed, because it was announced that they had undertaken certain responsibilities with regard to what was called the littoral of the Red Sea, to which the right hon. Gentleman ascribed a number of miles. [*Cries of* "Order!"] He was quite in Order, as he was stating the reasons which had been given for the adjournment. The right hon. Gentleman ascribed an exaggerated number of miles to the littoral of the Red Sea, which he had said the Government had undertaken to defend. As a matter of fact, the Vote before the Committee was of this nature—it was an Estimate of additional expenditure during the present year arising out of military operations in Egypt; it was an Estimate for money which was to be expended within the current financial year; and, therefore, the task, whatever might be its importance, of protecting any ports in the littoral of the Red Sea, was one which could only be undertaken and accomplished, so far as this Estimate affected it, during the remaining three weeks of the financial year. The question raised by the right hon. Gentleman was really one more affecting the Naval Estimates for next year, than this Supplementary Estimate. If the question was raised at all, the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman had used were arguments against proceeding with the last Vote for Army Expenditure quite as much as against proceeding with the present Vote. This was merely a Vote to cover the expenditure which had been incurred, and would be incurred during the rest of the financial year in connection with the present military operations in Egypt, and he saw no reason why it should be treated in such a way that questions raised upon it would not be identical with those raised upon the Vote which had been already discussed.

MR. GIBSON: Only one word to clear up a point. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Acland) stated that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Dodson) has been down here on several Government nights waiting until half-past 12 for the purpose of introducing the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. There is no foundation whatever for that statement. Although this may not be the first day the Bill has appeared on the Paper, the Government must have put it down knowing perfectly well there was no real chance or intention to introduce it.

MR. DODSON: I must take leave to correct the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) as to a matter of fact. The Bill has been the second Order of the Day for several Government nights now in succession, and we have been waiting here to-night, as on former nights, in the hope of being able to bring it on before half-past 12. I do not wish to raise a discussion, therefore I will not say how it has happened that it has never been reached; but this I will say, that we are most sincerely anxious to take the Bill on Thursday next. If we dispose of the Vote before the House, we shall only have some short Civil Service Estimates to dispose of as the first Order on Thursday, and we may, therefore, hope to be able to reach the Bill in good time on that day.

MR. BIGGAR said, that they had been told that this Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill was an extremely important measure, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Dodson) would bring it on after other Business had been disposed of—probably somewhere about

12 o'clock at night. Well, it appeared to him (Mr. Biggar) that the Bill was far too important to be brought in at such an hour as that. He was inclined to think it a Bill which ought to be taken as the first Order of the Day. If he was rightly informed, he believed that a great many borough Members were likely to speak on one side, and a great many county Members on the other. Two nights, therefore, would very likely be occupied with the discussion on the introduction. As to the statement that there were only some small Civil Service Supplementary Estimates down for Thursday as the first Order, and that this important Bill could come after, he was informed that it was extremely doubtful whether those Civil Service Estimates would be got through in one evening. He was inclined to think they would occupy at least two Sittings — Thursday and Friday, he thought, would be much nearer the mark than the present calculation, and it was preposterous that a question of this kind should be pushed on by a tyrannical majority. It was an unreasonable majority, because the arguments were entirely in favour of an adjournment, and there was no argument worthy of any consideration in favour of voting this money at so early an hour.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, there was much more reason and sense in the action of the Opposition that night than usual, and he should support them in the course they were taking, because there was undoubtedly a wide distinction between the statements made at the commencement of the Sitting by the Prime Minister, and those made by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War that night. When a sum of £140,000 was asked for, even if there was only a small minority opposed to it, it was reasonable that it should be taken at an earlier hour. He did not intend to take a Division; but after the speech of the noble Marquess, and after the desire shown by hon. Gentlemen opposite to discuss this question, the Motion ought to be agreed to. But he hoped the Opposition would not act as they had on the last Vote—that was, after talking for two nights, run away without voting. He hoped they would, in this instance, give their votes if necessary, and that the Government would accept the protest not only from Gentlemen on the other side, but from Gentlemen on this side of the House, and allow this Vote to be discussed at an earlier hour.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he certainly was surprised that the Government had not thought it right to allow another opportunity of discussing this Vote. What was the explanation given by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty? What they desired was to discuss the question of the way in which the Navy was to contribute its assistance to these operations on the Navy Estimates—that was to say, instead of settling that matter now they should have another debate next week, or the week after. This present proposal on the part of the Government was distinctly a waste of public time, a distinct invitation for a further debate. The Committee were at this moment fresh to the consideration of this question. A great deal of what had been said in the last two or three nights would probably be repeated; events and circumstances would occur which would compel the repetition of warnings and protests which had occupied the attention of the House during the last two nights of the debate. The Government now refused to allow a reasonable opportunity for the consideration of their naval policy, and they asked that that naval policy should be considered a fortnight hence, when the discussion of the Naval Estimates came on. He ventured to say that that was a mode of procedure which would not conduce to the rapid transaction of Business, nor to the settlement of the gravest and most important questions. The Committee had a right to know how it was proposed to furnish ships for this additional service which the Government contemplated. There was a Vote for the Naval Services in the war in Egypt on the Red Sea; and, of course, there was the Report stage when this question might be discussed. The Government might put the Vote down so that a debate of reasonable length might be taken on the Report. Upon that understanding he would recommend his hon. Friend to withdraw his opposition, and permit the Vote to be taken that night.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am not without a hope of our arriving at some practical settlement of this question. I should like, however, to repeat that I am perfectly unaware of having made any such declaration as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has referred to. What I think I did was, in reply to speeches that had been made in this debate, to state, perhaps more fully than we had previously done, the grounds which justified Her Majesty's Government in their policy with regard to the defence of the Red Sea ports. I do not question the undertaking of Her Majesty's Government in any manner, and I should like also to point out that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his Friends are a little too much in haste for any statement on the subject on which they desire information. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to events which have necessitated the protection of these ports by the Naval and Military Forces; but it is a little too premature to ask Her Majesty's Government to make a declaration as to the future arrangements for a state of things which has not yet come into existence. And if such a statement could be made, it would hardly be advantageous, at this moment, to the protection of these ports. I hope some arrangement can be come to. Her Majesty's Government desire to give every opportunity of bringing on a discussion of this matter, if necessary, on Report; but this must be the first Order on Thursday, and I should think it would be the general wish of the House that, if there should be any time available before half-past 12, an attempt should be made to take the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. However, all I can say is, that the Government will put this question down on Report in as good a position as is in their power, with the general desire, as I believe, that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill should be proceeded with.

Mr. PERCY WYNDHAM said, he understood the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) to say that the occupation was to be of short duration; but he (Mr. Wyndham) thought that before Parliament was called upon to spend any more money, or endanger any more lives, they ought to hear from the Government what reasons they had for hoping that the Egyptians would be able to hold the Red Sea ports after we evacuated them. The Egyptians possessed no Army; it was destroyed a year and a-half ago by operations which we were not allowed to call a war.

The CHAIRMAN: The Question is that I report Progress, and ask leave to sit again, and on that Motion it is not in order to discuss these points.

Mr. PERCY WYNDHAM said, he was endeavouring humbly to give arguments in favour of reporting Progress. If the Government intended we should retain the possession of these ports, let them say so, and there would be some reason in voting the money. Egyptian troops could not hold them against the vast hordes of brave Soudanese who had beaten them before and would defeat them again.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now exceeding the proper limits.

Mr. HEALY asked whether it was not the fact that the noble Marquess the Secretary for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had discussed these questions on the Motion for Adjournment?

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member had considered that the noble Marquess was out of Order, he should have risen at once. There must be some latitude given in respect to explanations of statements previously made.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he hoped to be able to do something to arrange this matter. He certainly had voted on two former occasions in favour of reporting Progress; but he felt now that the noble Marquess had offered a fair compromise—namely, that there should be an opportunity of discussing this question on the Report.

An hon. Member said, he did not think there had been anything like a definite intimation from the noble Marquess in response to hon. Gentlemen as to when Report was likely to come on, or anything approaching that; while, on the other hand, several hon. Members opposite agreed with hon. Members on this side about the new departure taken by the Government on this question. With regard to the Navy, there were several hon. Gentlemen who wished to say something on questions which were not such small matters as the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) suggested. At all events, the speech of the noble Marquess, ready as he always was to meet hon. Members in a fair spirit, had given no guarantee that there would be an opportunity for discussion at a reasonable hour.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he wished to make an observation in the same spirit as that of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). The noble Marquess opposite had stated that it was the intention of the Government to place the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill as the first Order of the Day, after the Supplementary Estimates, on Thursday. If the noble Marquess would only use the great influence he possessed with the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) to induce that hon. Gentleman to withdraw his block against that Bill, that measure might be taken at any hour and read a second time without opposition. Then the noble Marquess would be able to redeem his promise to fix the Report of these Estimates at such an hour as would ensure a fair discussion. If the noble Marquess would do that, the House would be well-advised in accepting the arrangement.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Does the right hon. Baronet suggest that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill should not be the second Order?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: No; I suggest that the noble Marquess should induce the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) to withdraw his block.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I shall be glad to use any influence I have to induce the hon. Member to withdraw his block; but do I understand the right hon. Baronet to suggest that the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill should not be the second Order?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It might then be taken after half-past 12.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I will see what can be done. If the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) withdraws his block, so that the discussion might take place, I believe it would be convenient to make that Bill the second Order; but that must be provided that the block be removed.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he should be disposed to prophesy that it would be half-past 12 before Supply was finished on the Supplementary Estimates on Thursday next, so that unless this question was discussed now, it never would be discussed, and, in point of fact, there would be no real opportunity; and even if the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) withdrew his block, it was not certain that some other hon. Member would not block the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, so that it would be in the same position and could not come on before half-past 12. The Government would occupy all the time till then, and no substantial progress would be made. This simple arrangement for saving time would end in an absolute waste of time. The Navy Estimates would come on next week, and all this discussion about Egypt would be repeated. If the Government wished to save time, they had better allow all the speeches that had been prepared to be delivered now.

Captain PRICE said, he should like to ask the Government whether the Report of the Army and Navy Estimates could be taken on Thursday, before the Civil Service Estimates were taken?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member cannot require the Government to fix a time for taking the Report.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: That would not be possible. Hon. Gentlemen on the other side are aware that if Supply is not the first Order on Thursday, the Rule which precludes our going into Supply will come into force, and it will be absolutely necessary to make Supply the first Order.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 46; Noes 111: Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Original Question again proposed.

Captain PRICE said, he could not think of entering upon the question he had to raise with reference to the Royal Marines at that hour. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty thought that five minutes would be sufficient for his purpose, he (Captain Price) was of a different opinion; and, under the circumstances, he should reserve the observations he had to make until another time.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he did not in the least doubt the good intentions, or the *bona fides*, of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. He should have no objection to the discussion taking place on Report, provided it was brought on at a reasonable hour, and he would, therefore, suggest that the Government should fix a time after which they would not take the Report. It was quite evident that there were a number of important subjects to be considered in connection with this Vote; but the convenience of hon. Gentlemen on these Benches would be met by an assurance that the Report would not be taken after 10 o'clock. That would afford a more suitable opportunity for the discussion of the important points to be raised, which would otherwise have to be taken at that unreasonable hour (2 A.M.). He was sorry to see several hon. Members leave their places when this Vote was put from the Chair, and it was much to be regretted that some hon. Members knew so little of the important questions which were involved in the Navy Estimates.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the cost of the transport ships lost in the Red Sea fell upon the country or was covered by insurance? He would also be glad to know whether there had been any loss of life?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN, in reply, said, that only one transport had been wrecked in the Red Sea, the loss of which did not fall on the Estimates.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to draw attention to a paragraph which appeared in *The Standard* newspaper, to the effect that the ships of war belonging to Russia and other Foreign Powers were furnished with the electric light; whereas, of the English ships in the East of a certain size, not one had any electric light apparatus, and that all were deficient in the scientific appliances with which the foreign ships were supplied. He asked, if this statement were true, whether the Admiralty intended to take any steps in the matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, this question had been asked and replied to on a former occasion. The only ship belonging to the East India Station of the size to which the electric light was usually applied was the *Euryalus*, and that ship left England in the year 1878, before the system of electric lighting was adopted in the Navy. It was not usual, and he did not think it would ever be the custom, to fit the smaller class of gunboats with the electric-light apparatus. There was, at all events, a strong opinion against this; and in order to remove the idea that the absence of electric lighting was any loss to the Force on the Red Sea, he might say that it was the opinion of many competent authorities that the use of the electric light for the purposes of war was not of the importance which some persons imagined.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had not answered the question of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). The hon. Member asked why it was that vessels smaller than the *Euryalus* were not furnished with the electric light? The statement was that all the foreign vessels much smaller than the *Euryalus* were furnished with the electric light; but what was more serious, in his opinion, was that those foreign gunboats were also supplied with machine shell guns, while our ships were not. It was the universal testimony of all who had seen the Russian, Italian, and French gunboats now in the Red Sea, that, in every single respect, with the exception of their crews, they were superior to the English vessels of the same class. That was a serious state of things, because England depended for its security on her Fleet, and it was evident that this must not be allowed to fall behind the Fleets of other Powers. It was a question with many authorities whether it had not already done so. He did not propose to go into the question of the size and construction of our ships, on which point, however, a great deal might be said; but he would like to have a distinct reply from the Secretary to the Admiralty, as to why the machine shell guns promised some time ago for ships on foreign stations had not been furnished, and why our gunboats were not furnished with the electric light?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, he thought he had dealt with the question of electric lighting as applied to gunboats. He would suggest to the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) that he should not believe everything he might read in the newspapers. However, it was quite possible that some of the foreign vessels at Suakin were furnished with more modern appliances than our own. There were gunboats and gunboats; and a vessel recently fitted out would probably have all the newest appliances of maritime warfare, and he thought the hon. Member would find that any new vessels which the Admiralty might fit out would be furnished with those appliances. But it was impossible that either the electric light or quick-firing shell guns could be fitted into ships which were already in commission on the East India Station.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he should not have risen again but for the unnecessary impeachment by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty of the report referred to by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). The authority in this case was the Correspondent of *The Standard*, Captain Cameron, a gentleman remarkable for his experience and ability. He passed from the newspaper report which the hon. Gentleman had so summarily disposed of to the statement of no less an authority than Lord Charles Beresford, who had pointed out some time ago, in an interesting article, that all our ships of war were inferior to those of foreign nations in the matter of machine shell guns.

An hon. Member asked whether the practice in the British Navy was different from that in Foreign Navies with regard to scientific appliances; and whether the Committee were to understand that the gunboats in question were of a different size to that of the *Euryalus?*

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, he was not aware what was the practice of Foreign Navies with regard to electric lighting; but he had stated the practice in the British Navy adopted on the advice of the highest authorities—that was to say, the system of lighting by electricity was not considered suitable for the smaller class of vessels.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Thursday.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

BANKRUPTCY APPEALS (COUNTY COURTS) BILL.—[*Lords.*]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

[BILL 118.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Solicitor General.*)

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, he did not propose to offer any opposition to the Motion for going into Committee on the Bill; but he desired to take that opportunity of expressing his regret that the Government had thought it necessary to introduce the measure. He believed that the supposed necessity for it had not been experienced, and that the Bill was prematurely brought in; he thought also that the Preamble of the Bill was open to the most serious objection. Now, so far from thinking, as he had heard it said, that this Bill was no reflection upon the Bankruptcy Act of last Session, he thought, on the contrary, that this Bill undid one of the most valuable parts of the work done by the Standing Committee in the course of the discussion on the provisions on the Bankruptcy Bill. One of those provisions was to provide one General Court of Appeal for bankruptcy cases. Instead of allowing the country bankruptcy cases from County Courts to go first before the Judge, and afterwards to a Court of Appeal, thereby making a double Court of Appeal for country cases for every district, except London, they had established, as they thought, a General Court of Appeal. Well, then, before that system was brought into operation, this Bill was introduced, and the reason alleged was a supposed block in the Court of Appeal. He thought it would have been worth while to show whether the bringing of appeals from County Courts made such an addition to the work of the Court of Appeal as to render this Bill necessary. At present, they had experienced nothing of this kind; it was purely a matter of surmise. He did not believe that the Act would cast any additional work on the Court of Appeal; because, under the old system, the County Court Bankruptcy appeals were heard in London, and the Court by sitting one day a-week was able to get through all the County Court appeals, and, at the same time, to do a large portion of the business of the London Court. Therefore, he thought that the supposed necessity for the Bill, on the ground of additional labour being cast upon the Court of Appeal, had not been made out. But the provisions of the Bill seemed to be open to more or less serious objection; it was proposed that all appeals from County Courts in bankruptcy matters should go to a Court composed of the Chief Judge in Bankruptcy and another Judge in the same Division. Well, he believed that to be a perfectly illusory proposal; it was nothing more than an appeal to the Chief Judge in Bankruptcy. The Chief Judge was, of course, a Judge who had the greatest experience in bankruptcy, and to whom any one of his colleagues would naturally defer; and, therefore, he said that the appeal under the Bill would be merely an appeal to the Chief Judge, who would, in fact, be sitting alone. Under the old system, there was at least an appeal to the Court of Appeal; but, under this Bill, it was proposed that there should be no appeal to the Court of Appeal, unless the Chief Judge gave leave. Therefore, unless the Chief Judge felt sufficient hesitation about his decision, leave would not be granted. His (Mr. Davey's) impression was, that this system would be found intolerable by the people who had to go to County Courts for jurisdiction in bankruptcy, and that Parliament would be asked before long to recur to what he had thought a Standing Committee had established last year—namely, one uniform Court of Appeal for the country. He did not propose to ask the House to divide against the Motion for going into Committee, particularly at that late hour (2.15 A.M.); but he could not allow that stage to be taken without at least expressing his humble opinion that there was no necessity for the Bill before them.

MR. WHITLEY said, he supposed the House was bound to take the assurance of Her Majesty's Government that there was a necessity for this Bill, on the ground of there being a block of business in the Court of Appeal. It seemed to him to be rather a hand-to-mouth proceeding to transfer, in this way, business from one Court to another, the effect of which could only be to create another block. Under the present system, the Judge who presided over the Court of Bankruptcy was sent out on Circuit, and the result was a block in that Court, which was entirely due to the Judge's absence. He hoped before the debate closed that they should have some assurance from the hon. and learned Solicitor General that the Government intended to make an arrangement which would render it unnecessary to allow that Judge to go on Circuit, and, at the same time, make it unnecessary to institute another Court of Appeal.

MR. WARTON said, there was considerable force in the argument of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey). He (Mr. Warton) himself strongly objected to the idea of the Court of Appeal proposed to be established; one reason being that the one Judge associated with the Chief Judge would probably agree with him, and, if he did not, he would hardly like to express dissent from him. They knew well what had taken place when the appeal was to a Chief Judge and two other Judges. Lord Penzance said that it was well known that two ordinary Judges would not venture to put their opinion against his; and he (Mr. Warton) was equally sure that one ordinary Judge would not venture to put his opinion against the Chief Judge. It appeared to have been forgotten that the second Judge on the Court of Appeal was to be taken from some other Court, the result of which would be that one of the Law Courts would, some day, be closed to suitors, on the ground that the Judge was sitting as a Court of Appeal in Bankruptcy. The Bill would have the effect of removing one block and creating another. It was a very strange thing, after all they had heard about Standing Committees, to find that their sole success—the Bankruptcy Bill—no sooner came into operation than it created a block of business, particularly as, on account of that Bill, the Standing Committee had received so much praise for the work it had gone through. He did not like the principle of the Judge giving leave to appeal from his own decisions, which, he believed, by degrees would give rise to a vicious system. Appeal, in his opinion, ought to be a matter of right, and not a matter of law.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he would point out that the Bill assimilated the appeal from the Bankruptcy County Court Judge to the appeal in other cases. No objection had been taken to the Bill when it was read a second time, and he had heard of no objection being taken to it since.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

VALUATION (METROPOLIS) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 108.]

(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence, Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Enabling owners and lessees to appeal).

MR TOMLINSON moved, as an Amendment, to add at end of Clause—

> "Provided, that any form of return, order, notice, or document required to be given to or served on the occupier under the principal Act shall, except where the owner or lessee is liable to be assessed or to pay any rate or tax in the place of the occupier, be deemed to be sufficiently given or served, notwithstanding this Act, if addressed to such occupier and left on the premises to which the return, order, notice, or document relates."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Words *added.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clause *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (MESSRS. G. AND J. BURNS).

Resolved, That the Contract with Messrs. G. and J. Burns, for the Greenock, Ardrossan, and Belfast Mail Service, be approved.—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. JOHN HOLLOND, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," as to the Registration of Working Men's Clubs, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JOHN HOLLOND, Mr. FRANCIS BUXTON, Sir JOHN KENNAWAY, Mr. LYULPH STANLEY, and Mr. STUART-WORTLEY.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS BILL.

On Motion of Admiral Sir JOHN HAY, Bill to adjust the numbers of the electors in some constituencies of the United Kingdom, and to provide for a more equal distribution of the duties of the Representatives, having consideration to Population and Taxation, *ordered* to be brought in by Admiral Sir JOHN HAY and Mr. JAMES A. CAMPBELL.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 131.]

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. BERESFORD HOPE, Bill to extend the Borrowing Powers of the University of Cambridge; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BERESFORD HOPE and Mr. RAIKES.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 11*th March,* 1884.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILL — *Committee — Report*—Mr. Speaker's Retirement.*

NEW PEER.

Alfred Tennyson, Esquire, having been created Baron Tennyson of Aldworth in the county of Sussex and of Freshwater in the Isle of Wight—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGES OF FIVE AND SIX.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

EARL DE LA WARR said, he rose to ask the Lord President of the Council, If any information could be given relative to a child, aged eight years, who had been attending a board school at Cheltenham, whose death, according to the evidence given before a coroner's jury, was caused by inflammation of the membranes of the brain, and that the mental strain from overwork hastened her death? and to move—

> "For copy of the evidence given before the coroner's jury; also for Return of the number of children under the age of five years and under the age of six years attending schools which are subject to Government inspection."

He was especially desirous of asking the attention of the noble Lord opposite to this case, and also to bring it under the notice of the House, as it was not, he regretted to say, a solitary one, which might, perhaps, have been attributed to some peculiar circumstances; but others of a similar kind had recently occurred. They were driven to the conclusion that there were causes now at work which were likely to produce very serious consequences in the education of young children. What he wished specially to refer to was the over-pressure, the overwork which was now imposed upon children, and in numerous cases upon very young children in board and other schools. He believed the evidence which he was about to ask the noble Lord to lay upon the Table of the House would go very far to show that if overwork in a school was not the sole cause of the death of this child, yet, at least, that it was hastened by it. He abstained from making comments until the evidence was before their Lordships; but he felt sure that it was a subject which deserved much attention. It had attracted the notice of the Medical Profession. Eminent men in that Profession did not hesitate to say that many evils affecting the health of children and young persons might arise from overwork in study. It had been noticed frequently of late years that the eyesight of many of these children had been seriously affected. It was often attributable to school work and over-employment of the eyes on print. The strain of the eyes in reading and fine sewing required of children now to bring them up to the Standards which they had to pass not unfrequently resulted in defective vision, which was more especially apt to occur when there was an inherited tendency to it, and where general bodily nutrition was faulty. It was further said—and he believed with great truth—that excessive application to study in early years would sometimes produce hopeless imbecility by forcing the brain of young children. There was another effect which had been noticed by medical men—the increase of headache among children. He was informed that this had also attracted serious attention in Germany, and was attributed to overworking of the brain. But in the face of these facts the Education Department of the Privy Council had lately issued a New Code raising the Standards still higher, against which, he believed, numerous Memorials had been sent by school managers to the Privy Council. He wished now to say a few words with reference to the ages of children attending board and other schools. There had been gradually growing up a system of bringing—he might say of forcing—children of very tender age into schools and subjecting them to the discipline and strain upon their minds which were required for learning what certainly at that age, if it could be learnt at all, could not be of use either to themselves or others. He had taken some pains to inquire into the subject, and, so far as he could learn, the number of children between the ages of three and five years at schools under Government was very considerable indeed. It had been put as high as 400,000, and though he could not vouch for the strict accuracy of this number, it was doubtless very large. He would ask their Lordships to consider for a moment whether children of such tender ages were capable of receiving the instruction which was expected to be imparted in these schools. Observe what these children of three to five years of age were expected to do. He had been informed that they had to prepare for an examination by Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in reading, writing, counting, needlework, and knitting. He believed this was the programme, or something very similar to it. He would ask, was it possible that a child of three or four years old could derive any advantage from being subjected to such a course of what was called education? But, what was more, was it not likely to injure a young child, both in mind and body, to cripple instead of gradually develop the intellect, and to check physical growth? It was well to look for a moment to one of the chief causes of this pressure being put upon young children. The great object of schools under Government inspection was to obtain the largest possible amount of the Government grant. The more children that could be brought into the schools at whatever age and made to pass the examination of the Government Inspector, so much more was added to the income of the school; so that the object was not only to get the child into the school, but to force it up to such a Standard that it might pass the examination. This was one of the great evils of the system of pecuniary grants dependent upon results. The managers of a school, as well as the master of the school, were all under the influence of this—to make a good show to the Inspector, and to earn a large share of the Government grant, with little thought of the mental or bodily effect upon the children, who were first driven into the schools under a penalty for non-attendance, and then placed under a system of intellectual pressure which might deprive them of bodily and mental energy in after life. If this applied to children of more mature age, with how much greater force did it apply to children of three or four years of age, who might be fixed for hours in the day to a bench at an age when they should be running free to amuse themselves, and be crammed with grammar in a crowded room when they should be enjoying fresh air and sunshine? It was impossible to conceive greater torture to very young children of a lively temperament and disposition than to sit for hours in a dull schoolroom with a master or mistress standing before them talking of things of which they could not have the slightest conception of what was meant. A child, an infant of three or four years old, would more readily converse with nature and the objects around it in the natural world than with gloomy walls and unintelligible utterances in a school-room. It seemed to him a very mistaken notion to place infants of tender years under the care of trained masters and mistresses who might have little or no sympathy with children, or no real knowledge of what a child was. In connection with what he had just briefly referred to, their Lordships must not forget the poverty and wretchedness which often, especially in towns, surrounded these children in their own homes, and how much it must tend to disable them for any great mental work or exertion. He desired to mention one instance out of many which he feared might be found. In the City of Glasgow it appeared by the last Census that out of 114,759 families 40,820 lived in homes of a single room. In a report which had lately appeared in *The Times* by Mr. Marchant Williams, to take one instance only in London, it was stated—

> "There are schools in the Finsbury division filled with children of whom 60, 70, or even 80 per cent, come from homes consisting of one room only."

There was one more point which he desired to notice as bearing materially upon the condition of children who were sent to board schools—he meant the poverty and destitution in many cases of the parents. In the same report to which he had referred, Mr. Marchant Williams said—

> "In one of the Clerkenwell schools I found on the day of my annual inspection that 40 per. cent of children come to school sometimes without a breakfast, and 28 per cent come sometimes to afternoon school without having had any dinner."

It was added—

> "These facts are not so entirely exceptional that they might be considered applicable to a considerable proportion of the children attending the board schools in my district."

He mentioned these facts because he thought it was quite impossible not to see that these children must be so weakly from want of food that they could not be benefited by the amount of education and training which they were expected to undergo. He would not now trouble their Lordships any further. He had very briefly referred to these facts because it seemed to him that the social condition of children at schools could not be lost sight of in considering educational questions, and he hoped at a future day they might be brought under their Lordships' notice in a fuller and more complete manner.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the evidence given before the coroner's jury relative to the death of a child, aged eight years, who had been attending a school at Cheltenham, and whose death, according to the evidence, was caused by inflammation of the membranes of the brain, and hastened by the mental strain from overwork.

"That there be laid before this House Return of the number of children under the age of five years and under the age of six years attending schools which are subject to Government inspection."—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, he wished to call attention to a worse case of death from over-study than that referred to by the noble Earl. The noble Earl was, no doubt, aware that a short time ago a Memorial had been prepared, signed by 66 medical men in Bradford, and presented to the Chairman of the Bradford Schools, against over-pressure in school study. The first name on the list was that of Dr. Alexander, who was the senior consulting physician in Bradford. This gentleman at first refused to sign the Memorial, because he was opposed to agitation in the matter. Afterwards, however, he signed the Memorial, on the ground that within three weeks' time there were no fewer than three cases, one of them being fatal, brought under his notice as having been caused by over-study. Now, this fatal case was that of the child of a teacher in a Board school; and though, as he (Lord Stanley of Alderley) had been informed, this teacher had not exerted any undue pressure, yet it was natural that *The Bradford Telegraph* should write—

> "If a teacher does not exercise due discretion in regard to his own child, what discretion can he be expected to have in regard to the children of other people, in whom he has no interest, while the remuneration for his labour is dependent on the success with which he can get the children crammed for the Inspector?"

He would ask, in respect of these cases, whether the Education Office had yet come to a decision as to the Bradford Memorial against payment by results and home lessons? The Education Office was constantly acting *ultra vires*, and going beyond the provisions of the Act of 1870; and the Lord President, as Head of that Office, did not appear to do his duty by restraining them within bounds. He had encouraged them as to home lessons, and had put the people of Bradford to the expense of applying for a *mandamus*, and the Lord Chief Justice had occupied a day in hearing the case, and more time would be consumed in a further trial of the legality of insisting on home lessons. It also appeared, from a letter of the Vicar of Staines, that the Education Office was endeavouring to enforce an illegal rate for enlarging a school to admit children of three years old, notwithstanding that there was not a word in the Education Act as to children under five years of age. He would further ask the Lord President whether he was prepared to abide by his statement in that House at the close of last Session, that the new, or Mr. Mundella's Code, was easier than the preceding Code? in spite of more than 40 remonstrances against the severity of the new Code from various towns, which had been published by the National Union of Elementary Teachers. Lastly, he would ask the noble Lord the Lord President whether he was going to uphold the sacrifice of sewing in girls' schools to the teaching of drawing, which added £40,000 a-year to the expenditure of the London School Board, with no appreciable result?

LORD NORTON said, he had no objection to a high standard of education; but he did object to the forced education produced by this system of payment by results—a system unknown in any other country. It led the teachers to give up all their time to the clever children for the purpose of winning the higher prizes, and to the neglect of those children who could not win them prizes, who, in the teachers' phrase, were "no use" to them. The sooner they got rid of that system the better. When they returned to the system of fixed salaries, the teachers would devote themselves to the general education of all the children who were committed to their charge. He hoped on an early day to bring forward a Motion asking their Lordships to express their opinion on this subject. It was in preparation for that Motion that he now desired to ask the Lord Privy Seal whether any inquiry was being made about the increasing complaints of over-pressure in public elementary schools, and the mischievous expenditure under the present system, unknown in any other country, of paying for national education by grants on details of show results; such grants, moreover, being attached, in an ascending scale, to higher subjects than the bulk of children in elementary schools, unless in very exceptional cases, can properly reach?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he thought that the question of payment by results was hardly one which came within the range of practical politics; at all events, he did not himself propose then to go into the question. But with respect to the Questions which had been put to him, and first as to the Question of the noble Earl who had raised the conversation, the subject of the death of the child at Cheltenham had been very carefully inquired into both by the Coroner's Jury and also by an Inspector of Schools, who had been specially sent down to look into the matter. Before the latter, however, no evidence was produced in addition to that produced before the Coroner's Jury, which, he thought, was of a very satisfactory kind, and which left little or no doubt as to the real character of the case. There was no doubt that at first the doctor who attended the child and the Coroner were inclined to think that overwork in the school had something to do with the death of the child; but it did not appear that either of those gentlemen was acquainted with the requirements of the Code to which they were inclined to attribute some bad effects on the child's health. But they had to look to the evidence and the finding of the Coroner's Jury. The evidence showed that the child was attending an exceptionally good school, and was under the care of an exceptionally experienced and considerate mistress, and that there was no reason whatever to suppose, until the time of her last illness, that she had been subjected to any overwork in the school which could have accounted for her ill-health. He found that at the last examination several children had been very properly withheld from examination upon the ground of ill-health; but it did not appear to anyone that this girl was a child who ought to be withheld on those grounds. Then it appeared on the inquest, and by the *post-mortem* examination, that the child had a fatal disease which could not have possibly been produced by overwork in the school—that, in fact, she was suffering from tubercular disease of the brain, as well as lung disease. The immediate cause of death was tubercular disease of the brain, and there was no reason whatever to doubt that her death was quite unconnected with her schooling. The Coroner, being inclined at first to take the other view, specially directed the attention of the jury to this point, and almost invited them to express their opinion in his sense. The jury, however, did not do so, but simply returned a verdict to the effect that the child had died from disease of the brain, and afterwards added a rider that no blame whatever attached to the authorities of the school. So much for that case, which certainly did not support the alarmist views of the noble Earl. With regard to the Bradford case, he was not able to go into that now; but he believed a general statement had been made. As far as he was aware, however, no facts relating to particular children had been supplied which could be investigated. If any were supplied, of course they would be inquired into. As to the question of infants, there was no doubt that an infant was any child from three years old to seven years old; and the noble Earl opposite seemed to think that infants were subjected to the conditions of the Code. That, of course, was not the case, as a child did not enter the First Standard until it reached the age of seven years. As to the general question of disease among children which could be conceived to be produced by overwork, he wished to say that the evidence, as far as the Education Office had discovered it—and they had taken great pains to discover it—did not appear to give cause for alarm. For instance, the Registrar General had been consulted as to the statistics of disease among children; and the result was that, while the general health of children had greatly changed for the better within the last 10 years as compared with the previous 10 years, with respect to diseases of the brain and nervous system, with which they were chiefly concerned in that controversy, it had been found that there had been no increase whatever among children in England or Wales. He had already said that he would not go into the question of payment by results; but he was bound to say that his noble Friend had a happy way of begging the question in putting his own Question, of which the words on the Paper were rather a striking specimen. He asked whether any inquiry was being made into the increasing complaints of over-pressure, and the "mischievous" effects and "show results" of the present system? Of course, these words might be the text of a discussion which would last all night. He did not admit either the "mischievous effects" or the "show results." In fact, he did not know what he meant by show results. Surely not reading, writing, and arithmetic?

Lord NORTON: There are other subjects.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council) said, there were other subjects; but they could only be taken upon the condition that the ordinary subjects were mastered, and the noble Lord would be astonished to find in how small a number of cases they were taken up. He (Lord Carlingford) was only that day looking at a Report made by one of the Inspectors, in which he said that out of 17,000 children who had been examined in Manchester, there were only 4 per cent who had even taken up special subjects; and he hoped his noble Friend knew that they could not be taken up at all in any school which had not passed 70 per cent of the children through the ordinary Standards of examination. The result of that had been to reduce the number of children taking up those specific subjects. He certainly did not wish that these specific subjects should be extinguished. The Education Department were anxious that they should be taken and taught, but only where it could be done usefully and effectually, and without any sacrifice of the main objects of the Elementary Education Act. He would give their Lordships a specimen of the result of the New Code. He took one of those subjects which were sometimes laughed at—animal physiology. According to a recent Return, they found that in the four months before the Code of last year came into operation in England and Wales 22,000 children had taken up that subject; but during the four months that had elapsed since, only 4,800 children had taken it up. Therefore, his noble Friend need not be at all apprehensive that the New Code was unduly stimulating those specific subjects at the sacrifice of essential education. As to the other part of the noble Lord's Question, whether any inquiry had been made as to the results of over-pressure, he might say that the greatest attention had been paid to the subject. The Education Department had considered it in every way, and in consultation with their Inspectors; and although the noble Lord objected very much to the Code of 1883, they had no reason to think that it increased the demand on the children. It ought to have a directly opposite tendency.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: Oh, no.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council): The noble Lord seemed to know more about the subject than he did; but the opinion which he had expressed was his own opinion and that of the Vice President, and of those who were responsible for carrying out the Act. At the same time, it was very possible that in some cases those who had to work the system and who were interested in it, such as school managers and teachers, might commit the error of trying to do too much in the endeavour—probably the vain and mistaken endeavour—to earn a larger grant at the expense of some of the weaker children. The Department had very carefully looked into that matter, and in issuing the Code for the present year—which was laid upon their Lordships' Table to-day—they had endeavoured to guard against those effects. They had made changes which he believed would not alter in any degree the intentions of the Code of last year, but which would prevent misuse of it. For the first time, managers would be held responsible by the Department for the care of the health of individual scholars who might need to be withheld from examination or relieved from some part of the school-work throughout the year. Then the Inspector must satisfy himself that the teacher had neither withheld scholars improperly from examination, nor unduly pressed those who were dull or delicate in preparation for it at any time of the year, and that, in classifying them for instruction, regard had been paid to their health, their age, and their mental capacity, as well as to their due progress in learning. The following, among others, would be considered reasonable excuses for either withholding a scholar or not presenting him in a higher Standard:—Delicate health or prolonged illness, obvious dullness or defective intellect, temporary deprivation, by accident or otherwise, of the use of eye or hand. If a scholar should fail in two subjects, or twice in the same subject, it would generally be permissible to present him again in the same Standard. Beyond these relaxations the Department could not go. They believed that such relaxations were not without their risks, because, much as they were bound to guard the health of the children, there was a risk of abuse in the other direction. The Department hoped, however, that no such fate would attend them. The changes were of considerable importance, and he hoped they would re-assure the minds of noble Lords and others who were interested in the subject without sacrificing the great object of the Act.

Earl DE LA WARR: Do I understand the noble Lord to say that children between three and five years old are not examined in reading and the other subjects I have mentioned?

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council): There is no individual examination, and no payment by results, until after the age of seven years.

Earl DE LA WARR: Is there no examination?

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council): An examination of classes. As to the ages of the children, there is no information which can be given beyond that contained in the Annual Reports; but the noble Earl can have the evidence taken before the Coroner at Cheltenham.

First Motion *agreed to.*

Second Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Earl STANHOPE said, he rose to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government would undertake to introduce the proposed Bill to amend the Irish Land Act in the House of Lords? It would be in the recollection of their Lordships that on Wednesday last the Chief Secretary for Ireland, speaking on behalf of the Government, stated that on an early day after Easter either the Treasury or the Irish Government would be prepared to lay before Parliament proposals as to the amendment of the Land Act, and to state how far they were prepared to go in amending that Act. He thought he could show two very good reasons why such proposals should be introduced in their Lordships' House. In the first place, he would remind their Lordships that, in 1882 and 1883, a Select Committee of this House considered the whole question of the Irish Land Act, not with the view of retarding, but for the purpose of facilitating its operations; and the Committee recommended that portions of the Act which did not work satisfactorily should be extended, particularly the Purchase Clauses. Nothing had been done since, though now, tardily, the Government had acquiesced in the desirability of making proposals. The Purchase Clauses were now said by the Irish Land Commissioners, in their last Report to Parliament, just presented, "to continue to operate slowly." And one of the reasons they gave was that purchasers would not come forward

> "Because of the expectation of further legislation granting more favourable terms to tenant purchasers."

Another reason why the Amendment Bill ought to be introduced in the House of Lords was that there were many noble Lords in that House who were the owners of land in Ireland, and others who, though not Irish landowners, filled high judicial positions, and understood the sale and transfer of land better than any other people in the Kingdom. He also hoped—though, perhaps, the hope was in vain—that the Government might be disposed to consider other clauses of the Act, which the Select Committee also recommended should be extended—namely, the Emigration Clauses. Lord Derby had publicly stated—and he thought it was a very sound opinion—that public money would be well spent in providing for the emigration of a number of the poor peasants of Ireland. Any noble Lord who had been in the West of Ireland must know that even if the small land tenants there had their land free of all charge they could not keep body and soul together. The principal object of his Question, however, was to ascertain whether the Government would be disposed to introduce this Bill in the House of Lords?

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, to which the noble Earl has referred, it was very clearly laid down how far Her Majesty's Government thought they would be justified in making proposals in the direction of amending the Land Act, and I have nothing to add to the statement then made. With regard to the particular Question of the noble Earl, I am sorry to say that I cannot give any such undertaking on the part of the Government as he asks for. Nevertheless, I sympathize with him in the object which he has in view. I constantly press my Colleagues to introduce certain Bills in this House. I sometimes succeed, and I very often fail; but I am quite certain that I should fail this time were I to make the application. It seems to have escaped my noble Friend's attention that this Bill, of which the basis is finance, is essentially a measure for the consideration of the House of Commons.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 11th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee — Thames River Preservation, *appointed* [House counted out].

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Metropolis Water, *put off;* Metropolitan Railway (Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement), *committed* to a Select Committee.

Public Bill—*Second Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders * [127].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILLS—DELIVERY TO DOORKEEPERS.

RESOLUTION.

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS moved—

> "That Standing Orders Nos. 203 and 214 be amended by leaving out 'Doorkeepers,' and inserting 'Vote Office.'"

He stated that a mere verbal alteration was required in these Standing Orders, in order to carry out a change which had been made in regard to the arrangements of the House. Hitherto Private Bills had been delivered by the doorkeepers, and it was considered expedient that in future they should be delivered at the Vote Office.

Motion *agreed to.*

METROPOLIS WATER BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir THOMAS CHAMBERS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was—

> "To make provision for the supply of water by measure within the limits of the Metropolis, and certain places in the neighbourhood thereof, by the Companies authorized to supply water within such limits; to amend the Acts relating to the said Companies as to charges, dividends, and the issue of new capital, and for other purposes."

The House would be quite familiar with the question of the water supply of the Metropolis; because for the last 60 years it had been, over and over again, the subject of controversy in the public Press; there had been frequent debates and Divisions in the House upon it; and Select Committees had been appointed more than once to consider the question. The House was quite aware that the water supply of the Metropolis had to be purchased and paid for for every man, woman, and child within it, and that the supply was, practically, a monopoly, which had been necessarily granted to the Water Companies of London, which were eight in number—namely, the New River, the East London, the Southwark and Vauxhall, the West Middlesex, the Lambeth, the Chelsea, the Grand Junction, and the Kent Companies. In 1880-1 an inquiry was made by a Select Committee into the complaints which, from time to time, had been made in the public Press, and on the part of various districts of the Metropolis, that they were unfairly dealt with in regard to the supply of water. The House would also be aware that at present the charge for the water was quite irrespective of the quantity consumed by the customer as well as of the quality. The assessment was made upon the rateable value of the property in the Metropolis, a mode of charge first brought about by the late Lord Shaftesbury, who was for many years Chairman of Committees in the other House of Parliament. In the course of some inquiries before Lord Shaftesbury, that noble Lord made a suggestion which the Water Companies took notice of, and since then they had charged according to the rateable value of the property supplied. It was in reference to this mode of assessment and charge that the outcry against the Water Companies of London had been raised. It had created the greatest discontent, and he thought with a good deal of reason, on the ground that it was not a proper mode of charging for the supply of water. The charge had been made upon the assessments on the rateable value since about the year 1855; and when it was first made the rateable value of property in London was about £4 per head of the population. At the present time the rateable value of London was £7 per head of the whole population, so that the water was now charged for at a rate 75 per cent higher to the customers than it was in 1855. Now, the Companies had done nothing to earn that increased charge, either in respect of the quantity or quality of the water, nor had they done anything to make it right that the customer should pay 75 per cent more now for the water than he did in 1855. Not only had the rateable value increased from £4 to £7 per head of the population, but it was daily increasing, and, in all human probability, would continue to increase. He contended that the principle upon which this payment was made was a wrong principle, and that it could not possibly be maintained. The dislike of the population—their disgust, he was about to say, at having to pay the present water rates was very great; and he did not think it would be possible for the Water Companies to maintain the principle of assessment they had adopted, and for the last 30 years maintained. The principle worked against the consumer year after year, and would continue to go against him, as long as the rateable value of the property within the Metropolis increased, and nothing could be more unfair than that the people of London should now pay for the same article 75 per cent more than they did 30 years ago. He was not complaining of the Water Companies. Like all other monopolists, they exercised their powers within the rights which Parliament had conferred upon them, and it would be idle to complain of them. They had to consider the interests of their shareholders, so long as they kept within the limits of their statutory powers. Indeed, some of them not only said that their charges were made in strict compliance with the rights Parliament had conferred upon them, but that they had not come up to the full exercise of their powers. No doubt they were perfectly entitled to use that argument; but those who supported the Water Companies of London would have to consider what weight such arguments were likely to have in the long run in the face of the public experience of the kind of supply which the population of London received. It must also be borne in mind that the cost of the supply to the people of the Metropolis was altogether unequal. For instance, a house in a fashionable situation like South Kensington would fetch £400 a-year; whereas a similar house with the same number of rooms, but in a more unfashionable quarter, would only fetch £130 a-year. The difference in rent was represented by a difference in the rates between Russell Square and South Kensington; nevertheless, the quantity of water consumed was the same, and the quality was the same; therefore, the charge bore no relation whatever, either to the quality or the quantity of the article paid for. In regard to gas, which, as they all knew, was also a monopoly, there were regulated charges. Parliament had interfered and introduced in favour of the public, stipulations against the Gas Companies under which they were to supply the article they trade in, giving the Gas Companies, no doubt, some advantages when the review of their charges took place; but at the time the review took place the cost of the manufactured article was getting cheaper and cheaper in the country, while the cost of water, which was not manufactured, but had only to be pumped up and distributed, was continually increasing, and would continue to increase, to the public. Therefore, the inequality and injustice between the charges made for the two articles were absolutely beyond controversy. There was no excuse for the present state of things, except the language of the Acts of Parliament under which the charge was made; and no one could contend that Parliament had not only the right, but was bound to interfere in the interests of the consumer. Of course, if a case of injustice could not be shown, the complaint must fall to the ground; but if it could be shown, having due regard to the interests of those concerned—namely, the present Water Companies, and without injustice to them, that something could be done to rectify the continually increasing injustice done to the public, it ought certainly to be done, and no doubt Parliament would undertake to do it. This Bill proposed nothing further than to give the option to the customer of taking water by measure, and not of paying for it according to the rateable value of his property. He would then pay only for what he had. He could not remember another instance of an article bought and sold, where the price charged had no relation whatever to the quality or quantity of the thing sold. It was so, however, with regard to water. The Bill proposed to give the customer power to say to the Water Companies—"I will take my water by measure, and I will pay for it according to the quantity I consume." Surely nothing could be fairer than that; and if there might be certain cases in which it would not be fair—as, for instance, where the quantity taken was very small, and the cost of supplying it larger than the average—those were matters for a Select Committee to inquire into and settle. No doubt, the Committee would make allowance for any extraordinary circumstances, such as the cost of supplying Hampstead Hill, or a district where there were only a few houses, and those very much scattered. Those were special circumstances for the consideration of a Select Committee, which would not allow injustice to be done to the Water Companies any more than they would allow the present state of things to get continually worse in relation to the public. It had been said that the present arrangement was an arrangement in favour of the poor—that the assessment of the rich paid part of the cost of supplying the poor; but the statistics entirely disposed of that argument, and it had no foundation in point of fact. It was shown that a rate of 3*s.* a-quarter was now charged in the poorer districts of London, and that 3*s.* a-quarter would more than pay for all the water the poor consumed. It was urged, on the part of those who opposed this Bill, that the poor should be encouraged in the consumption of water. At the same time, one effect of this measure would be to put an end to the present enormous cost of water within the limits of the Metropolis. No doubt there were statistics by which it could be proved, by those who were the best judges of the matter, that 50 per cent of the water supplied by all the Water Companies was wasted. That was a very serious thing. It did no good to anybody—it did not even clear the sewers. It only filled the receptacles which went down to the Thames, and put the authorities to the expense of pumping it out again. It had done no good whatever; and if that 50 per cent of water could be saved, it would postpone for many years the consideration of where a new supply was to be found to satisfy the wants of an overgrown population like this. Under these circumstances, the Corporation of London thought the Bill they proposed was a Bill which might safely be committed to the care of a Select Committee, constituted as the House might consider most convenient, where those who represented the Water Companies would be fully heard, and where the promoters of the Bill would be able to call witnesses in support of their case. It would then be for the wisdom of Parliament to say whether some change in the law might not be adopted which would put an end to the evil now so greatly complained of, and give the same satisfaction to the population of London as that which they had felt in an analogous case—namely, the gas supply. If that could be done, he thought the Corporation of London would have done a great public service in submitting this Bill to the consideration of the House. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Thomas Chambers.*)

MR. COOPE said, he rose to oppose one of the most extraordinary pieces of legislation which had ever been attempted to pass into law in that House. It was singular that the Corporation of London should have brought in this Bill, inasmuch as the Corporation had power to legislate over about one square mile of the Metropolis; whereas they were now proposing to legislate for something like 300 square miles, that being the area occupied by the present Water Companies. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Recorder of London had made one or two rather startling observations, which, however, could hardly be relied upon by the House as positive facts. The hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that nothing had been done by the Water Companies as regarded either the quantity or quality of the water supplied; but, nevertheless, that their rates and their receipts were very much greater. The hon. and learned Gentleman made this further remarkable statement—that the water wasted was of no use whatever, and that, in point of fact, it only occasioned trouble and expense to the Water Companies, and especially to the local authorities, who had to pump it up again and throw it into the river, down which it flowed away without advantage or profit to anybody. Was the hon. and learned Member not aware that the waste water was of the greatest possible benefit in cleansing and sweetening the drains and sewers connected with the houses of the poor? In that respect it was invaluable in a sanitary point of view. It was rather curious that the Corporation of London should have brought in a Bill which certainly would afford great relief to the wealthy bankers, merchants, and warehousemen occupying large and valuable properties in the City; but which would punish the poor in order to benefit the rich, by stinting them in their supply of water. He did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman could possibly get over that argument. As regarded the charges made by the Companies, the public were certainly under a great misapprehension upon that score. He was perfectly well aware that the Water Directors were looked upon as extortioners, or as greedy cormorants, whose sole object was to rob those who took their supply of water. But what were the Waterwork Directors doing? They were carrying out, most faithfully and most strictly, a great number of Acts of Parliament. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), if he were present, to give his testimony as to what had been done by the Water Companies, especially since the Act of 1871, in the way of increasing the quality and the supply of water. The quality was no longer a question in suspense or doubt. As a matter of fact, owing to the nice regulations between the influx of water and the efflux of drainage, the Metropolis of London had now been made the healthiest city in the world. It had nothing like the same extent of death rate as many other large towns. From the last Report of the Registrar General, it appeared that the death rate in London was 19·3 per 1,000; while many other large towns—such as Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool—were in a very different position. Indeed, he believed that the death rate in Manchester was as high as 29 per 1,000. He thought that fact would show that, even with the most modern legislation, where every effort had been made to avail themselves of the improvements of science and modern inventions, the Provinces had not been able to improve upon the water supply of London. He might state that the present mode of charging upon the rateable value had been consistently acted upon by Parliament for the last 60 years; and many measures which had been submitted as an improvement upon rating in accordance with the annual value had been rejected—such, for instance, as the cubical contents of the houses supplied, the number of rooms they contained, and many other principles. But in all the changes which had been suggested the question of supplying water by meter had never been submitted until the introduction of this strange, singular, and ill-considered Bill of the Corporation of London. The water rate was obviously a tax upon property, and it was so arranged that the poor should receive full benefit at the expense of the rich. The Water Companies had felt that it was their duty to meet the wants of the poor in that respect. If they attempted to supply water by meter, they would at once considerably curtail the quantity of water the poor would get. At present, every small house received a supply from the Water Companies of 66,000 gallons per annum. According to the Corporation Bill, they would receive only 24,000 gallons per annum, or a little more than one-third; but the charge to the poor would be 3*s.* per quarter, and 3*s.* was the lowest charge for the use of the meter. Therefore, the total charge would be 15*s.* a-year; whereas many houses now supplied by the Water Companies did not pay more than from 8*s.* to 10*s.* a-year; so that it was evident that, while the poor would be robbed of a considerable part of their water supply, they would have to pay a great deal more for it. It was perfectly true that innumerable objections had been made against the Water Companies for charging upon this system, and, no doubt, the water rate collector was a most unpopular person to many people; but if the public would only realize what was really the fact, that the Companies were honestly, faithfully, and loyally carrying out their part of the duty, it was only right that the public should fall in and do their part as well. As regarded the effect upon the Water Companies of the present Bill, he did not believe the framers of it could ever have thought of what its consequences would be. The Water

Companies had fully considered the proposals contained in the measure; and in the calculations they had made they only differed as to whether they would be totally ruined, or simply lose one-half of their income. He maintained that, fortified by many Acts of Parliament, the Companies were entitled to their statutory dividends; and if, as was probably the case, the day might arrive when the Companies were purchased, they could only be purchased upon that basis. Mr. Smith went into a careful calculation; his value of the Water Companies was based upon that principle, and he (Mr. Coope) maintained that no other principle could fairly or honestly be applied. He was certainly surprised, and regarded it as something wonderful, that such a revolutionary measure as this should be introduced by the ancient and venerable Corporation of London, possessing, as it did, such grand old traditions of its own. Seeing that that Body was so apt to speak with pride of the good old times and the good old customs, he was very much astonished that his right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. N. Fowler) could possibly give his countenance to so revolutionary a measure.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR): It was prepared during the time of my Predecessor in Office.

MR. COOPE asked if he was to understand that the Lord Mayor did not give his support to the present Bill?

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, he did not go so far as that; he had only said that the Bill itself was prepared when his Predecessor was in Office.

MR. COOPE said, that, at all events, the Bill had been introduced into the House by the hon. and learned Recorder for the City of London; and therefore he presumed that it was introduced with the sanction and approval of the Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen. He was very glad to find that the Lord Mayor was a little shy in the matter. It induced him to entertain the hope that it was quite possible the measure might not be introduced with such earnestness as he was afraid it must have been; because really to press forward a Bill of this kind as the child of the Corporation was simply suicidal to the Corporation themselves; because, if they once advocated the doing away with vested rights and interests, and induced Parliament to sanction such views, he should like to know where the Corporation themselves would be? It was very curious that this Bill should have been introduced by the Corporation of London, inasmuch as the House ought to believe that they were fully alive to the great necessity of an ample and good supply of water, and that they had taken active measures themselves with that object in view. It was unfortunate, however, that the Corporation of London did not appear for centuries to have taken any active steps at all for obtaining a satisfactory and perfect supply. Down to the 13th century Londoners were wont, with pail and pitcher, to resort to the banks of the Thames, or to draw their water from wells at Wallbrook, Oldbourne, Longbourne, Holywell, Clement's Well, Clerkenwell, and other places; but ultimately it was found that such a supply was not sufficient, and then they showed great energy in laying down leaden-pipes from the town of Tyburn to a great stone cistern then in public use in Westcheape, at the point now occupied by the monument of Sir Robert Peel. This "great conduit," as it was called, occupied 50 years in construction, and for more than three centuries the Lord Mayor and Commonalty, aided by private gifts from worthy citizens, continued to supply London with water. In the end that supply was found to be insufficient, and about 300 years ago the Corporation obtained an Act to enable them to supply water by pumping from the Thames. But they had not energy enough to carry out their own scheme; and in 1580 they made arrangements with a Peter Morris, and leased to him the first arch of old London Bridge for 500 years, at 10*s.* a-year. Morris built there his Thames Water Mill, for pumping Thames water into the City, and set up works as the first water monopolist in the Metropolis. It was said that the Lord Mayor and Aldermen went in state to witness Morris astonish the citizens by throwing a jet of water over the bridge and over the steeple of the Church of St. Magnus. Thus the Corporation lost a great opportunity for themselves; and the water supplied by Morris from the Thames, besides being limited in quantity, was often exceedingly turbid and foul, and the squalor of the poor occasioned well-grounded apprehensions that the plague would renew its dreadful visitations. Moved by such considerations, the Corporation obtained power from Parliament, towards the end of the Reign of Elizabeth, to cut a river for conveying water to the City from any part of Middlesex or Hertfordshire. Having obtained their Act, with true Corporate procrastination, they rested on their oars for six or seven years; and in 1603 the plague broke out. They then sent surveyors to survey the springs of water situated in various places round London, and after much delay they fixed on the springs of Amwell and Chadwell in Hertfordshire. In 1607 they obtained a new Act authorizing the conveying of these waters by an aqueduct to the City. Two years elapsed, and they then made over to Sir Hugh Myddleton the right to construct a new river, and to bring water from the Hertford springs. The Corporation themselves would have nothing to do with it; they said—"You must do it on your own responsibility." Sir Hugh Myddleton was a man of energy and skill, with business habits, and he at once set to work and contrived to get together a Company for constructing a conduit from Amwell to London. Unfortunately, not possessing a proper knowledge of engineering, he was obliged to make the channel between Bishop's Stortford and London double the length he had calculated; and the consequence was that when he had completed his works about half way to London—namely, to Enfield—he was obliged to stop for want of funds. He applied to the Corporation again, but they turned a deaf ear to him. Myddleton then applied to the King; and, thanks to the scientific knowledge of the Scotch King—James I.—that Monarch undertook to supply half the funds, on condition that he should have one-half of the profits and emoluments. To those terms Myddleton acceded, and subsequently a Charter was granted to the Company under the title of the New River Company. The shares of the Royal Incorporation in 1609 were divided into "King's shares," and the "adventures' shares," the holders of the latter possessing all the powers of management. He now came to the character of the water supply. Numerous official Reports had been made by Royal Commissions, Select Committees, and other public authorities between 1828 and the present time. The Duke of Richmond's Commission, in 1866, said—

> "That the abundance, permanence, and regularity of supply, so important to a great Metropolis, are secured much more efficiently by the great extent and varied geological character of a large hydrographical basin, such as the Thames, than by the necessarily very much more limited collecting areas that can be made available on the gravitation system. Further, that there is no evidence to lead us to believe that the water now supplied by Companies is not generally good and wholesome."

Mr. Ayrton's Committee said, in 1867—

> "We are satisfied that both the quantity and quality of the water supplied from the Thames are so far satisfactory that there is no ground for disturbing the arrangements made under the Act of 1852, and that any attempt to do so would only end in entailing a waste of capital, and an unnecessary charge upon the owners and occupiers of property in the Metropolis."

He did not think that he ought to detain the House longer than to say that he believed, from the pregnant words of the Speaker on taking the Chair, that the right hon. Gentleman had convinced every Member that it was his earnest desire to uphold the dignity of the House, and to preserve inviolate the faith and honour of Parliamentary engagements. It must not be forgotten that the measure was one which affected very large vested interests. He quite agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, who gave the Water Companies so courteous a reception at the Home Office the other day, that an Act of Parliament was not intended to last for ever, and that it might be, under certain circumstances, repealed; but when capital had been invested on the faith of Acts of Parliament, those persons who had invested their capital had a right to be fully compensated for the outlay which they had been induced to make. This Bill was fraught with danger to the community; it attacked interests which had hitherto been secured by the sanction of the Legislature; and he could not help thinking that the course taken with regard to it would have a considerable effect upon Railway Companies, Gas Companies, and all other Companies. The passing of such a measure would be most injurious to the community at large. The value of the property belonging to the Water Works Companies, although it had been undoubtedly depreciated by these proceedings, was at least £25,000,000 sterling, about one-half of which was in the hands of Trustees, and, therefore, belonged to women and children, who had no one to protect their interests except Parliament. He was sure Parliament would not forsake that precious trust, but would in this case, as in all others, maintain the right of vested interests, and see that the engagements contained in Acts of Parliament were fully carried out. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND seconded the Amendment. He protested against the second reading of this Bill on behalf of the shareholders in the Water Companies—a large proportion of whom were, as had been stated, Trustees and Executors—and all of whom had invested their money in reliance on Acts of Parliament. He protested against this Bill, because serious damage was by it proposed to be inflicted on the Water Companies without adequate, or, indeed, as the Bill stood, any compensation being given to them. The principal object of the Bill was to substitute supply by meter for all purposes, trade and domestic, for the present system. Now, if this change were desirable—and he would assume it to be so for the sake of the present argument, though he believed upon examination it would prove not to be so—and if it were beneficial to the public, let it by all means be adopted; but the change should not be made in the face of rights solemnly secured by Acts of Parliament, unless proper compensation were made in respect of the capital laid out in reliance upon those Acts, and of the vested interests secured by those Acts. He was almost afraid of using that term, as the Home Secretary a few weeks ago, when he received and lectured a deputation from the Water Companies, seemed to pooh-pooh "vested interests," and said that whenever any improvement was suggested "vested interests stood in the way." Upon that he (Sir Henry Holland) would only observe that though it was quite right, and even necessary, that vested interests, whether of Corporations, or Companies, or individuals, should give way before a clear and pressing public interest, it would be monstrous that in such case they should be practically confiscated; and wrong and unjust that they should even suffer whenever adequate compensation could be awarded. It was quite certain that if vested interests were to be treated, as they were treated in the Bill now under consideration, it would be a very unfortunate thing for the country at large, as it was unquestionable that capital would be largely invested in other countries, or, if invested here, would cease to be invested in undertakings established by private enterprize, which had proved so beneficial to the industry and wants of the country. What compensation should be awarded in cases like the present, and how the Companies could be properly secured in their statutory rights, could be readily tested by reference to the language of the Acts of Parliament by which those rights were vested in the Companies. It was clear, however, that the Corporation had had no regard to this point. They seemed to think that the Companies were bound to take what the Corporation thought fit to offer. Fortunately, however, for the Companies there was an excellent precedent in favour of their views which he felt sure would have great weight with the House. That precedent was embodied in the Instruction which, if this Bill were read a second time, his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins) was prepared to move. It was taken from an Instruction sent down to a Committee which was considering a somewhat similar question affecting the Gas Companies; and it practically secured to the Companies such a price for the gas supplied by them as would enable them to earn their statutory dividend. By whom was this precedent established? Not by the Companies or their opponents, but by the Government of that day; for it was, in fact, an Instruction prepared and sent down to the Committee by the Board of Trade. He (Sir Henry Holland) trusted that the Liberal Government of the present day and the House would be prepared to deal as fairly now with the Water Companies as the Government and the House dealt with the Gas Companies in 1868. He would, with the kind permission of the House, now mention two special points upon which he relied against the second reading of this Bill. The first point was that this was not the proper time to propose such an important change in the system of supply; and the second, that the Corporation of London were not the proper Body to propose it. As to the first point, he would remind the House that a Bill was to be introduced by the Government this year to create a new Municipal Government for the Metropolis. This Municipal Body, even if they did not purchase and take into their own hands the supply of water and gas to the Metropolis, would probably be invested with large powers for regulating that supply. Was it, then, wise or desirable to hamper them in advance by a system and regulations which experience might show, as he believed it would show, to be inexpedient in the interests of public and private health, on sanitary and economical grounds, and which they might, therefore, in a short time feel themselves bound to repeal? Surely this proposal should be postponed until the new Body had time fully to consider it in all its bearings. Again, it was hardly fair to the Water Companies to put them to the expense of fighting this question before a Body like the Corporation, instead of before a Body like the new Municipal Body, with whom the ultimate decision would practically rest. As to the second point, he would remind the House that the Corporation, who had only jurisdiction over an area of one square mile, were by this Bill endeavouring to effect a change over some 300 square miles, and affecting about 4,000,000 people. Not only that, but the Bill affected Companies who did not supply one drop of water within the City area. The Home Secretary had referred the deputation to the precedent of the Gas Companies. But upon examination it would be found that that supposed precedent failed. In that case the City Bill only applied to Companies who actually supplied gas within the City area; and the result of the proceedings was not a compromise between the Corporation and the Gas Companies, but a compromise, as he had already pointed out, between the Board of Trade and the Companies. The Home Secretary said that he should support this Bill, and a Bill of the Metropolitan Board of Works, by which it was sought to make the ratepayers liable in advance for any expenses incurred in respect of any Water Bills which that Board might think fit to bring in, as acts of "tardy repentance" on the part of those Bodies. He (Sir Henry Holland), however, did not believe in the repentance of those Bodies. He believed these Bills to be nothing more than bids for popularity; promoted from motives of self-interest; to get more power into their hands; to show that they were alive to the wants of the inhabitants of the Metropolis; and this in the hopes either of escaping merger into the new Municipal Board, or of being merged with more favourable conditions to themselves. This question of change of system of supply was far too important to be dealt with by a Body like the Corporation, and should not be brought forward except as a Government Bill, or upon the Report of a Royal Commission, after full examination of all the evidence for and against the scheme, which, he would observe, had, in fact, never received full consideration. As regarded the Bill itself, and its clauses, he desired to make a few observations. In the first place, it was by no means clear that the meter system for all purposes (trade and domestic) would work well from either a sanitary or economical point of view. It was certain that very much less water would be available for flushing and cleansing the great system of drains and sewers underlying the Metropolis; it was doubtful whether there would be water enough for that purpose. Should such be the case, there would either be great danger to the public health, or else the Companies would have to be called upon to find a sufficient extra supply for this special purpose, and for this they would have to be paid, and this charge would fall as an additional expense upon the ratepayers. Again, it was probable—he might almost say certain—that the poor would greatly stint their use of water, and thus lessen that personal and household cleanliness—already too little attended to—which was so important for public and private health. Great stress was laid upon this point both by the Committee of 1867 and the Royal Commission in their Report of 1869; and, though he did not often find himself in accord with the hon. and learned Gentleman the junior Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), he entirely agreed with his just observations upon this point in his book on *Municipal London*, which he would take the liberty of quoting to the House—

> "The establishment of a general meter system would be an unfortunate thing for London. The more water is consumed in the cleansing of houses and in bath-rooms, gardens, and so forth, the better it is for the public health and sanitary condition."

Nor did he (Sir Henry Holland) believe that this change of system was desirable from the economical point of view. He believed that the poor would lose, while the rich would gain. He would not trouble the House with figures; but, unless he had been misinformed, it could be proved that the poor in Liverpool and Manchester now paid more for the supply of water than the poor in London. Of course, he did not propose to test this by the proposed scale of 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons, as such a price could not be sustained. It would be absolutely unremunerative to the Companies, and seriously imperil their power to earn the dividend secured to them by Acts of Parliament; a power which had been recognized by a former Government in the case of the Gas Companies; a power upon the faith of which an enormous capital had been laid out, and very large sums expended, even in recent years, in improving filter beds and reservoirs, and thus improving the quality of the water supplied. The Corporation, in fixing this price, seemed to have overlooked the fact that in Liverpool and Manchester an initial fixed charge of 6*d.* or 3*d.* per pound was allowed on the rateable value of every house, whether supplied with water or not, in addition to the charge allowed for every 1,000 gallons of water supplied. No such initial charge was provided in this Bill. The price of 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons must, therefore, be greatly raised, and to this must be added the cost of the meter, and of keeping it in order. Thus, where a poor man was now charged from 6*s.* to 8*s.* per annum, he would have to pay, even under this Bill, a minimum charge of 12*s.* per annum, to which must be added the charge for the meter. He thought he was justified in saying that this was a Bill to relieve the rich at the expense of the poorer classes. There was another most unfair and unworkable provision in the Bill, to which he desired to call attention. It enabled any person to apply for a supply by meter; but it did not allow the Companies to compel persons to have a meter supply. This was unworkable in practice, as engineers and those well acquainted with the question must know. The evidence before the Committee of 1867 showed that if the change of system was to be adopted it should be made compulsory on all. Again, there was nothing in the Bill to prevent a person who had applied for and got a meter supply, but who was dissatisfied with it, coming to the Company and requiring them to go back, so far as he was concerned, to the present system, without regard to the cost and inconvenience thus occasioned to the Company. There were other points which showed the crude and unsatisfactory way in which this Bill had been prepared; but he would not now trouble the House with these. He would conclude by referring to one further point of some importance. It was proposed to make the poor rate valuation the basis of the charge for water. Now, that was a distinct breach of the arrangement made by Act of Parliament. The water charge was not in truth a "rate," but a charge or payment for goods supplied; and to make the poor rate conclusive was to introduce a principle which Committees had seen to be wrong, and to place the Companies wholly in the hands of parochial authorities, and to bind them to accept, as final, assessments in which they had had no voice. He would add that such a provision appeared to him to be, if not directly contrary to, at all events not in accordance with, the late decision in Dobbs' case in the House of Lords; for in that decision no reference was made to the poor rate valuation, while one of the Judges distinctly laid down how the net annual value should be arrived at. For these reasons, he protested against the second reading of this Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Coope.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Colonel MAKINS trusted the House would allow him to make a few observations upon the Bill, and he would endeavour to avoid, as far as possible, touching upon the points which had already been dealt with. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Recorder of London (Sir Thomas Chambers), in introducing the Bill, had been careful to abstain from telling the House what the

Bill contained; and, more than that, there were one or two things he had said in regard to it which could not be borne out by the Bill itself. In the first place, the hon. and learned Gentleman did not tell the House—and to him (Colonel Makins) it seemed to be an important matter, which had not yet been referred to at all—that the cost, supposing the consumers of London under this Bill were to adopt the meter system, would involve the Water Companies in an outlay of capital to something like the extent of £2,000,000, £3,000,000, or even £4,000,000, according to the cost of the meters, which had not yet been accurately ascertained. How was that money to be raised? The Water Companies had no power to raise such capital, and this Bill would give them no such power. Then in regard to another question which had been dealt with pretty freely—namely, the charge to the poor—the water rate and the meter rate per quarter under the Bill would amount to 18*s*. a-year; whereas there were thousands of houses under the present system where the annual water rate did not amount to more than 8*s*. or 10*s*. a-year, and for this excessive charge of 18*s*. per annum the consumer would receive less than half the quantity of water he now received. That was a very serious matter. In a crowded City like London they had more to fear from dirt than dynamite, because dirt meant disease, immorality, and drunkenness. There was no surer way of producing disease than by the generation of sewer gas, and the only way of preventing the generation of sewer gas was to provide a copious and plentiful supply of water, such as that which was supplied at present. They had been frequently told that the increase in the water rate had been in accordance with the increase in the assessment of the rateable value of the houses. That was a point which had been urged in favour of this Bill by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary when he received a deputation the other day, and which had been confirmed by the Recorder of London in introducing the measure. At first sight, no doubt, it appeared to be a great hardship; but if they looked into the matter closely they would find that it was not so, because the rate paid for water for the domestic supply included not only the supply used for domestic purposes, but also the public supply which, under other circumstances, the ratepayer would have to provide. As London increased, no doubt the sewers increased, and so did the amount of water required for cleansing the streets and extinguishing fires; and, therefore, the water rate must necessarily increase in exactly the same proportion, just as the poor rates and other rates increased. A man who lived only six months in London only used a certain amount of water, and only required a certain amount of police protection; but, as a citizen of London, he had to bear his proportion of the general local taxation, and to pay his share both of the police rate, the sewer rate, and the water rate. If the meter system were adopted, he would only pay by meter for his private supply; but the parish would, nevertheless, be called upon to pay for the public supply, and that would be charged to him in the public rates. Consequently, it would be exactly the same eventually, because he would have to pay the private rate *plus* his share of the public rate. Therefore, that hardship, which had struck so many people, when it came to be examined really had no force. When the Home Secretary received a deputation from the Water Companies, he referred to the way in which the Water Companies should be dealt with. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said there were three courses—purchase, competition, and regulation. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman had considered the character of the present Bill, he might have added a fourth course—namely, annihilation—because, as far as some of the Companies were concerned, if the Bill passed in its present form, they would be unable to pay a dividend on their ordinary Stock, or upon their Preference Shares, or upon their borrowed capital, although there would be an immense augmentation in their working expenses. Consequently, the question could only be settled in one way—by the Company ceasing to exist at all. It was said, with regard to the purchase of Water Companies' rights, that the terms prescribed in the Act of 1881 were too high. No doubt that might be the case; but he would remind the House that wherever the undertaking of a Water Company had been purchased—as in the case of Middlesborough, Leeds, and other places—the price paid for it had been on much the same basis, and, in most cases, even a higher price had been paid than that adopted by Mr. Smith as the basis of the water purchase of the interest of the Metropolitan Companies. He came next to the question of competition. That had been dismissed summarily by the Home Secretary; and well he might so dismiss it, because if the value of the Water Companies' property was not now secured, what inducement would there be to people to subscribe their capital for a competing scheme? In addition to that, there was the physical difficulty of obtaining room in the streets for the laying down of more mains; and, therefore, the question of competition might be very quickly disposed of. He came next to the question of regulation, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had referred to the system adopted with reference to the Gas Companies. Now, as far as the Bill was a Regulation Bill, he (Colonel Makins), personally, could see no objection to it, although he had no right to speak on behalf of the Water Companies, because he was not a Water Director, and had nothing to do with the Water Companies, except as a Trustee for certain women and children. This Bill, as a Regulation Bill, left little to be said against it, except that it contained no power of amalgamation, a step which was pressed upon the Gas Companies by the Government. He should like to have seen in the Bill a power to amalgamate, because he believed that amalgamation would have a beneficial effect upon the supply, avoid cross-pumping, and also that it would reduce the price. In the case of the Gas Companies, there were originally 13 of them, and there were now only three large Companies, over one of which he had the honour to preside. They had absorbed into themselves the other 10 Companies; and by that process they had got rid of about 100 Directors, 13 Secretaries, and 13 Accountants, together with a large staff of unnecessary officers; and the effect of that, together with the sliding scale, had been to cause a saving which amounted, in round numbers, to £600,000, £500,000 of which went into the pockets of the consumers in the shape of reduction of price, while only £100,000 went into the pockets of the shareholders in the shape of increased dividend. Therefore, if this Bill were to go to a Committee, he trusted that Amalgamation Clauses would be inserted in it. In that case they would be able to re-arrange the source of supply, and, by taking the supply from rivers when flooded, would be able to cheapen the cost of and improve the supply itself. There were other matters and regulations which might also be considered. He did not see why, in regard to future capital, the Auction Clauses should not be imposed upon the Water Companies in the same way as upon the Gas Companies. The outside public had been found ready to pay premiums for the purchase of Water Companies' Stock issued under the terms of an Act of Parliament; and in the case of one London Company which had raised its last capital by tender to the public, it had obtained it upon a premium of £9 per cent. That fact, in itself, appeared to be a very strong argument against what he might call the confiscatory character of the Bill. When the outside public were found ready and willing to pay a high premium upon the Stock issued by the Water Companies, it showed what faith the public attached to the security of Acts of Parliament. He had been somewhat surprised that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary should have taken the course he did on this subject in replying to the deputation which waited upon him recently. It was notorious that the effect of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was to send down the price of Water Stock very considerably; indeed, he seemed to have been playing skittles with the Stocks of the Water Companies, and they went down like nine-pins. Now, that sort of thing was not altogether satisfactory to the public; because, if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would only consider for a moment, he must remember, although the effect might be immaterial to a good many people, yet that many of the Water Shareholders were Trustees of poor women and children, and that a lowering of the price of Water Stock meant panic, terror, and a good deal of unnecessary suffering to a large number of persons. He could have wished that when the Home Secretary said what he did in reference to the Water Companies, he had also said a word in favour of keeping Parliamentary faith. He was quite sure the right hon. and learned Gentleman was one of the last men in that House to desire that Parliament should embark in a career of dishonesty. At the same time, his own view of the Bill was, that if it were allowed by the Government to pass in its present shape it would be a distinct act of public dishonesty; and it would inflict a deadly blow upon Joint Stock enterprize, and show the public what little reliance was to be placed on the authority of an Act of Parliament. As to the Water Companies, they were spoken of out-of-doors as rogues, robbers, and cheats, and all sorts of hard names were applied to them. They were public servants whose duties and remuneration were specified and fixed by an Act of Parliament. If they neglected their duties they were amenable to the law; but as long as they performed them they were entitled to the remuneration which was secured to them by Act of Parliament. In the Paper which had been circulated to hon. Members by the Corporation of London, it was admitted that there ought to be a remunerative rate secured to every Company, and that no price should be fixed for water which would be incompatible with their earning a remunerative interest upon their outlay. He wanted to know from the hon. and learned Recorder (Sir Thomas Chambers) what was the remunerative interest? What was the hon. and learned Member going to fix as remunerative interest? If he was prepared to give a remunerative interest, let him concede the remunerative interest provided by the different Acts of Parliament, and there could then be no doubt upon the matter. He (Colonel Makins) had placed upon the Paper an Instruction, which he proposed to move if the Bill were read a second time. He should, however, oppose the second reading; but if the Bill were read a second time, then he should move his Instruction, because it was exactly in accordance with the course taken in regard to the Gas Companies in 1868.

Mr. FIRTH confessed that he had been somewhat interested in hearing one observation which had fallen from the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down. The hon. and gallant Member had absolutely accused the Corporation of the City of London of having commenced a career of public dishonesty. That was a very hard term to apply to a Body so ancient in its history, and with such large claims upon the public regard at the present time. Nevertheless, the hon. and gallant Member had not been deterred from making that suggestion. Now, he (Mr. Firth) confessed that the position of a Metropolitan Member in the presence of a Bill of this kind was one of very considerable difficulty, although it could not be viewed without a certain amount of satisfaction. It was a matter which could not be regarded without a certain amount of satisfaction to find the Water Companies and the Corporation of London tilting at each other. There was some chance that, under such circumstances as these, the honest people of London were likely at last to come by their own. However, when they had a proposition like this put before them, they ought to consider it upon its merits, quite irrespective of the parties who put it before them; and, as the measure itself did not propose to give any increased power to a Body which was said to have a jurisdiction only over one square mile of the area affected, he thought they were in a position to examine the question from a more impartial and independent point of view than would otherwise have been the case. The Bill contained three main propositions. One was that the Shares of the Company should be put up at auction in the event of any proposed increase of capital, and he took that principle to be accepted by the House, seeing that it had already been adopted in the case of the Gas Companies as a proper one. With respect to the proposition that the annual value should be taken to mean the rateable value, that was merely confirming what had already been decided by the House of Lords. The third proposal was to supply water by meter. That was altogether a different matter; and if the decision of the House, on passing the second reading, were to affirm the principle that the supply of water was to be distributed by meter, he thought their difficulties would be greater than they were. He took it, however, that if the Bill were read a second time and referred to a Select Committee, all questions upon matters of detail would be carefully inquired into. The hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) spoke of the Bill as a measure of confiscation; but it was suggested that the Corporation of London had power to provide a water supply themselves, because there was no monopoly in the matter; and in that case the Corporation would be entitled to say that the public should be charged not even 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons, but that they should have a supply for nothing, if the City authorities chose. That argument was met by the hon. and learned Recorder for the City of London by the observation—"Why should you pay more for water than you receive in return?" It was competent for any householder to go without water altogether. ["No!"] The condition of the law was this at the present moment—that if a man took the water he must pay for it on the annual value of his house. If a man put down a pump in his own garden, and obtained water, he would be entitled to go without a supply from the Water Companies. He did not wish, however, to enter into any controversy upon that point. All he would say was that if he were to put down a pump in his own garden, he had no doubt that he would be able to get water, and to do without the present water supply; but probably he would not be willing to drink the water he got. Therefore, if a man were able to go without water altogether, he was not bound to pay the charges of the Water Companies; but if he did take it, then he was bound to pay the rates which they were entitled to charge by law. He might mention that a right hon. Friend of his—a former First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Ayrton)—would, under this Bill, have his water rate very considerably reduced; but yet his right hon. Friend considered the Bill to be a measure of confiscation. For his own part, he (Mr. Firth) was glad to see these questions taken in hand. To-day it was the Water Companies; to-morrow it would be the Corporation themselves. The Water Companies were to-day proposed to be delivered over to the tender mercies of Parliament for consideration; to-morrow the Water Companies would probably help the House to deliver over the Corporation of London; and he looked upon the prospect, either from the one side or the other, with the utmost satisfaction. On the whole, he thought it would be advisable to read the Bill a second time, in order that it might be referred to a Select Committee, and he trusted to such a Committee as that which was suggested by the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). Such a Committee would fully consider the question, and he hoped that such a consideration would not be excluded as that made public by the analyst of the Local Government Board —namely, that five-sixths of the supply of water in the Metropolis were more or less impregnated with sewage matter. He thought a statement of that kind should have far greater weight than the opinion of a Director of a Water Company that the water supply of the Metropolis was the purest that had ever been furnished for a great community. Unfortunately, the Water Companies undertook to supply pure water, and altogether failed to do it. However, the purity of the water, and the necessity of providing a supply at constant pressure for extinguishing fires, were questions with many others for the future. There was, however, one question which he wished to put to the Speaker on a matter of Order. He found in Sir Thomas Erskine May's book upon the Practice and Procedure of the House of Commons a reference to the votes of Members who were interested in Private Bills. Sir Thomas Erskine May alleged that the votes of such Members had been frequently disallowed. He gave many illustrations, and he (Mr. Firth) ventured to think that those illustrations applied to the position of many Members of the House on the present occasion who occupied the position of Directors of Water Companies. He had the highest regard for their personal honour and integrity; but in their official capacity as Directors of Water Companies he entertained some doubt whether they were entitled to cast their votes on this occasion against the interests of the public.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question alluded to by the hon. and learned Member could only be properly raised after the Division has been taken, when it will be for the House to allow or disallow any of the votes which have been given.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I hope the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. N. Fowler) and his Colleagues the Aldermen, who have found their way into this House, will feel happy at the turn which the debate has taken, and especially at the speech which has just been delivered. The *raison d'être* of the position of the Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen of the City of London, and of their presence in this House, is that they are bound to be the rigid and unbending defenders of the rights of property; and when they cease to hold that position I think they will cease to fulfil any position of usefulness in this House. The Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen, who represent the City of London in this House, must feel happy and delighted at the support they have received from the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth). It has certainly not been a friendly support, but is rather impelling them forward in their reckless and disastrous career by something which approaches more of the nature of a kick. I wish now to draw the attention of the House to two points which involve matters of principle. I think the speeches which have already been made have had more reference to questions of detail, which might properly be sifted in Committee, than to those questions of principle which should be considered upon the second reading. What I wish now to draw the attention of the House to is unquestionably a matter of principle, and it is a sentence in a document which has been forwarded to hon. Members by the Corporation of London in support of the second reading of this Bill. In the third paragraph of that statement—about the middle of it—the Corporation of London anonymously state that—

"They have not, however, failed to recognize that sanitary requirements demand that water should be used without stint; and that it is necessary that the wealthier consumers should, by paying an enhanced price, cheapen the cost of water to their poorer neighbours, and encourage them to use it freely."

Now, is the Lord Mayor aware that he and his brother Aldermen have put forward in this printed document the wildest Socialistic doctrine that, without any exception, I have ever heard enunciated on any platform in this country—even by Mr. Henry George? Nothing could exceed the extravagance of the Socialism contained in that sentence. Has the Lord Mayor ever heard of a graduated Income Tax? Has he ever studied the principles upon which such a tax is advocated? and, if so, is he aware that what is proposed in that sentence is nothing more than a graduated Water Tax? If he has studied the principles of a graduated Income Tax, and will kindly apply those principles to this sentence of the statement which he has circulated among the Members of this House, I shall be obliged if he will explain, without loss of time, how he—as the head of the Corporation of London, supported by his brother Aldermen—recommends Parliament to legislate upon such principles? Before I leave this precious document I should like to show to the House its fallacious and, if I may say so, its hypocritical character. Having set forth the Socialistic doctrine—

"It is necessary that the wealthier consumers should, by paying an enhanced price, cheapen the cost of water to their poorer neighbours, and to encourage them to use it freely,"

in a further sentence the Corporation go on to say that—

"It is desirable that the present sources of supply should be economized by its being made to the interest of the consumer to see that the water is not wasted."

Thus, in the first place, you propose to adopt the Socialistic principles of Mr. Henry George in order to encourage the use of water freely; and, in the second place, you propose to establish stringent regulations in regard to the use of water under the pretence of preventing waste. So much for this document put forward by the Corporation of London, which I hope the House will treat at its proper value. But this Bill goes much further. It proposes to deal with landed estates. It proposes, in Section 18 of the Bill, that—

"The rents and profits derived by any Company from any landed estate, houses, or property, although the same be not now directly used for, or be not now directly connected with, their water supply, shall, after payment thereof of all charges and outgoings and expenses of management affecting or payable in respect of the same from time to time, be carried to the credit of the undertaking of such Company, and shall form part of and be included in the profits of the undertaking of such Company, and the profits of the undertaking of any such Company (including such rents and profits as aforesaid) to be divided among the shareholders of such Company in any year shall not exceed the prescribed rate or the prescribed rates upon the paid up capital of such Company."

Now, the Corporation of London and the City Companies possess large landed estates, and I hope the Home Secretary, when he introduces his Bill for the better government of London, will remember the principles respecting landed property which are now laid down by the

Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen. Are the Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen, who put forward this Bill, aware that the landed estates which belong to the New River Company are held by a far better title than any of the estates belonging to the City Companies? The New River Company hold their estates under a Charter granted by King James I., in virtue of which the Company purchased land of which the ground rents now amounted to £4,000 a-year, and will in a few years, as the leases fall in, produce something like £50,000 per annum. That is the extent of the landed property which the Corporation of London propose to confiscate. Is the Lord Mayor aware that no later than the year 1871 Parliament laid down, at a time when a confiscating Government was in Office, that confiscation of this character could not be sanctioned; so that the Corporation is now actually proposing to legislate upon principles which the Government of 1871 would not look at. In 1871 Parliament enacted that nothing in this—the Metropolis Water Act—should be deemed to apply to any landed estate, houses, or property of the New River Company not directly used or connected with their water supply, or shall authorize or empower the auditor to investigate or audit any accounts of the New River Company other than those relating to their water supply; so that this sum of £50,000 a-year, to which the New River Company are entitled under the Charter of James I., and which was confirmed in 1871 by Act of Parliament, the Corporation of London now come forward to confiscate, and to confiscate without compensation. I think the Home Secretary, when he introduces his Bill, will be able to say to the Lord Mayor—"Out of thine own mouth shalt thou be judged." Who, after all, is it who comes to this House with this garb of philanthropy and humanitarianism upon them? If it is not a guilty party, it is an accused party; if it is not a convicted party, then it is a suspected party; and certainly they are not in a position to claim the confidence of Parliament for dealing with the water supply of London. I should like to ask the Lord Mayor how we are to defend the Corporation from the robbery proposed by the Home Secretary when the Corporation are themselves the first to propose the robbery of other Corporations? How are we to defend from confiscation those who are encouraging the Party opposite in their onward career of confiscation? Those who trample on the rights of others must not be surprised when the time arrives if their own rights are trampled upon. Under these circumstances, I hope the House will not consent to read this Bill a second time, especially on account of the principles which it contains. But if the House does read the Bill a second time, then I sincerely hope that hon. Members opposite, when they come to discuss the Bill of the Home Secretary, will remember, and will follow the principles, which have been laid down by the Lord Mayor and his brother Aldermen.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, it is a considerable source of satisfaction to us who sit on this side of the House to find that the guns of the noble Lord who has just spoken should be turned behind him, and that his stern-chasers are directed against the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of London. For my own part, I have always been an admirer and supporter of the Corporation, and I am prepared to give them my support this afternoon. I must, however, decline to enter into this triangular fight—if, indeed, it is not rather more than that in regard to the number of angles concerned—between the hon. and gallant Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins), the Corporation of London, my hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), and the noble Lord who has just spoken. I am not going to enter into the merits of the Corporation of London from the point of view of any hon. Member who has yet spoken. As far as the Government are concerned, and as far as the House are concerned, what we have to look to is what, in regard to this Bill, are the interests of the people of London. I do not say the interests of the people of London regardless of the rights of property, because the interests of the people of London are, to a large extent, bound up in the rights of property, as are the rights of everybody, and it is the interest of everybody to respect those rights. But what is the situation of the people of London in regard to the water supply of the Metropolis? Everybody knows that the existing system of water supply is most unsatisfactory. I think we came to this conclusion some years ago, when there was a proposal to purchase the interests of the Water Companies. That showed at that time that the system was not regarded as satisfactory, or such an attempt would not have been made. I will not go back now, or detain the House by entering into various subjects which have been discussed; but that Committee unanimously came to the conclusion that the state of things then existing ought not to be perpetuated, but that somebody or other representing the people of London should attempt to improve the situation of the inhabitants in respect to the water supply. I should have been very glad if there had been any chance of the Corporation of London and the Metropolitan Board of Works coming to an agreement on this subject. It has been said, and said very truly, that if the Corporation of London represent one square mile only of the Metropolis, there is another Body which represents a much larger area. That Body, however, has refrained from coming forward; and whenever we want to see the two Bodies, who profess to be the representatives of the Metropolis, acting together in accord, we find either that the Metropolitan Board is not able to support the policy of the Lord Mayor and Corporation, or that the Lord Mayor and Corporation are not prepared to support any proposal made by the Metropolitan Board. What do we find to-day? The Lord Mayor has introduced a Bill, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), who generally sits next the Lord Mayor, has on this occasion retired to a less prominent position, and is now sitting as far away from him as possible. [Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, who was sitting at the other end of the Bench below the Gangway, here got up and took his seat beside the Lord Mayor.] I am glad that I have succeeded in bringing the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works into line; but I believe that the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board is going to give his cordial support to the proposal to reject the Bill. It is unfortunate that whenever the unfortunate people of London require anything to be done for them you will never find these two Bodies, which ought to act together, acting in co-operation for the advantage and benefit of the Metropolis. That being so, and it being admitted that something ought to be done, I do not think the House ought to reject, on this occasion, the proposal which has been brought forward, and which offers a chance of doing something, simply because there is an objection against the Body from whom the proposal emanates. The Corporation of London have introduced a measure which they state is intended to deal with a grievance which, I venture to say, is felt on all hands by every man in the Metropolis; and their measure proposes, to some extent, to remedy the extreme unfairness of the present system. I am not saying for a moment whether or not the proposal now made by the Corporation of London is the best, or even as good, a proposal for dealing with that grievance; but that there is a grievance in this respect I think nobody will deny. The unanimous voice of the people of London, and, I venture to say, the common sense of everybody who has considered the matter, can have come to but one conclusion—namely, that the existing condition of things ought not, and cannot, continue. Then, if it is to be altered, the hon. Member who spoke on behalf of the shareholders of the Water Companies—the hon. and gallant Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins)—said very fairly that he did not object to a Regulation Bill so long as the Bill was a fair one. At all events, this is a Regulation Bill. It proposes to introduce a different system which *primâ facie* is more fair. That is a subject for consideration, and such questions as the objections to which the Bill has been subjected—whether it is more fair towards the consumer than the system that exists, or whether the proposals of the Corporation of London are fair and equitable as regards the Water Companies—assuming that an alteration has to be made, those are questions not for the second reading of the Bill, but for Committee. The Committee would have to consider whether the terms proposed in this Bill are or are not fair towards the shareholders of the Water Companies. I am quite sure that no Committee of the House of Commons would be likely to approve of terms that were inconsistent with the rights of property.

I cannot conceive for a single moment that the House will entertain a proposal to refuse the second reading of a Bill like this. Considering the enormous importance of the question; considering the universal acknowledgment that it is one which ought and must be dealt with; and considering the enormous injustice which the rejection of the second reading of the Bill would inflict upon 4,000,000 of people, I, for one, have not the remotest hesitation in saying, on the part of the Government, that it will receive their cordial support. It is perfectly possible, and almost certain, that fair terms will be arranged by the Committee. Therefore, I will not go into the questions which have been raised about whether, more or less, water will be taken for flushing the drains, or carrying away the sewage matter. Those questions would be thoroughly sifted in Committee; and I do not know why, except for the purpose of having a tilt with the Corporation of London, the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) has taken such deep interest in the matter. Perhaps he may have been acting from instructions which he may have received —from the advice he has been receiving from the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). I do not know whether the hon. Member is or is not a supporter of the Bill; but the House will very likely hear that from him presently. He is, however, a person who has a direct interest in the question, as he has in every question which affects the people of the Metropolis. Looking at this matter from an impartial point of view, and having had occasion to consider it fully for some years past, I have not the slightest doubt that what the House ought to do is to read this Bill a second time, so that it may be discussed by a Select Committee, not an ordinary Committee such as Railway Bills are sent to, but a Committee carefully selected by the Committee of Selection. In that respect I entirely agree with the proposal about to be made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). I hope the House will not allow itself to be run away with by the fears expressed by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock in reference to the question of landed estates. The proposal in the Bill, as I understand it, is to treat the Water Companies, in respect of their landed property, exactly the same as every Railway Company is treated—namely, that in respect of the land they hold it should be considered as part of the undertaking. That is the ordinary condition upon which the Railway Companies hold their land. We ought not to regard this matter either from the point of view of the shareholders of the Water Companies, or from the point of view of a like or dislike to the Corporation of London; but we should look at the Bill as one which proposes to do something for the people of London, and as one in which the population of the Metropolis are deeply interested. Under these circumstances, I hope that the Bill will be read a second time.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I will only detain the House for two or three minutes. I am quite prepared to admit that something ought to be done to put the water supply of London upon a better footing; and I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary missed a splendid opportunity of doing this some years ago. However, I will not go into that matter now. The question is, what are we to do with this Bill? The Corporation of London have come to Parliament, and have brought this matter forward as their proposal. Now, I should have supported any Bill brought forward by the Corporation of London, if it had been drawn on proper lines; but I object to the second reading of the present Bill, for one strong reason, because I believe that the main principle—which is to be found in the 4th clause and the 3rd Schedule attached to it—is one of absolute confiscation. It is all very well for the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite to say that this must be inquired into by a Committee afterwards; but the Committee will say that the House has sanctioned that principle. Now, the Water Companies have subscribed their money on the faith that Parliament has given them certain rights; and yet it is proposed to sweep away all the Parliamentary statutes, and all the Parliamentary property, by a few words contained in the 4th clause and the 3rd Schedule of the Bill. Now, as regards the case of Railway Companies. No doubt Railway Companies, at the same time, very often charge rates which are objected to; but would it be just or fair to bring in a Bill to declare that the Railway Companies should only charge Parliamentary rates to every passenger they conveyed? In the case of the Water Companies, they are entitled to make the charge they now make by Parliamentary sanction. Everybody knows—indeed, it was the sole argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman—that it was of enormous benefit to the 4,000,000 of the people of London that the water should be pure and free. But would it be fair to bring in an Act of Parliament, and say that the article proposed by the Water Companies should be rendered free to the people of the Metropolis, without any compensation to those who have invested their capital in producing it? No; you have already recognized the Parliamentary rights the Gas Companies had, and you have given the Metropolitan Board the power to purchase those rights on fair and reasonable terms. I am opposed strongly to any Bill which contains a proposal for absolute confiscation; but I am ready to support any Bill which respects the Parliamentary rights of the Water Companies. I shall certainly vote against the second reading of the present measure.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW wished to state, in the first instance, that he was not a member of the Corporation of London, nor had he a share in any of the Water Companies. He was, therefore, satisfied that what he had to say would be regarded as coming from an independent person. The Bill condemned the inequality of charging water rates upon a rateable value, and proposed to change the charge in future to one in accordance with measure by meter. That was said to be confiscation. It was said that payment by meter would be injurious to the Water Companies. Perhaps that might be so, if the Bill were passed on the lines on which it was at present drawn. There was a clause in the Bill which said that the minimum charge would be 12*s*. a-quarter, with 3*s*. for the meterage; but whether that was to be the actual charge fixed was clearly a matter that would have to be settled by Committee. It was a simple matter of detail, and it was more than the average price that was now paid by the tenant of a tenement under £20 a-year. Then it was said that the Bill would give to the occupiers of small tenements a minimum supply of water in order to save money. No doubt anything that tended to minimize the consumption of water ought to be prevented; and if the Bill passed the second reading an Instruction might be given to the Committee to prevent the measure from having such an effect by providing that, in the case of all tenements under £20 a-year, which would cover artizans' dwellings, the charge for water should be a charge on the landlord, and that he should be obliged, within a reasonable period after the passing of the Act, to provide proper measures for securing to the tenants a sufficient and constant supply. In 1871 an Act was passed, declaring that there should be a constant supply; and he thought that they were all agreed that that principle was a desirable one. Why had there not been a constant supply? It was because the people who had had to pay for the water were not interested in saving it. They paid the same price, whether they consumed a larger or a smaller quantity; and, therefore, there had been no demand for a constant supply, because a constant supply would also necessitate in the present system a serious increase of the cost by supplying every house. The hon. and gallant Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins) had said that the minimum price paid, according to the rateable value, by small consumers, amounted to from 7*s*. to 8*s*. a-year.

Colonel MAKINS said, what he had stated was that there were thousands of houses which now paid from 8*s*. to 10*s*. a-year, which would have to pay 18*s*. if the Bill passed.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW asked what the House supposed payment by meter would amount to for a constant supply? He did not intend to express any opinion of his own; but he would give the result of figures in regard to 2,500 houses in Wapping, Hackney, and Whitechapel, which had been supplied until very recently by the East London Companies by meter. The average cost had been about 6*s*. for each tenement, or about 1½*d*. per week. For that sum the occupier was supplied with 200 gallons per week, which was found to be sufficient for a family of three or four persons living in a small tenement. What he wanted to impress upon the House was, that when they talked about the benefit of the poor it must be borne in mind that the supply should be constant, as it ought to be, wherever the Companies now only gave an intermittent supply. The occupier would not be required to put in the necessary appliances for securing a constant supply; but that expense should fall upon the landlord. There was another advantage that would be gained. In small houses there was a too prevalent practice of having the receptacle for water inside the house, and in many instances close to the closet, by which means the water became polluted. If this Bill were passed, and a constant supply were provided, it would necessitate provision for the water being placed outside the dwelling house, and in that way the consumer would not only get a constant and a cheaper supply, but one that was more pure. The Corporation were blamed because they had put 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons in the Bill; but the amount was printed in italics, so that the Committee might settle the amount and insert a fair price for the public to pay. At the same time, it should be remembered that 6*d.* per 1,000 gallons was what the Water Companies themselves asked by their present Acts. It would further be left to the Committee to decide what was a fair price; but let them, once for all, get rid of the system of one man paying for another, and let the Water Companies be paid for what they supply. At present, they supplied water for flushing the sewers, which was paid for by the Local Authorities; also for cleansing the roads, and for putting out fires. Let those charges be paid by the Local Authorities. Every man should pay for what he had, and should pay a fair price, such as a Select Committee, after a full investigation, would determine. He hoped the House would pass the second reading of the Bill. He thought the Corporation of London had done a great deal of good by bringing before Parliament the question of supplying water to the Metropolis by meter.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he had not intended to take any part in the debate, because he had wished to save the time of the House, having already spoken on a water question which he had the honour to bring forward in the House a short time ago. That Bill had already passed the second reading, and was now going into Committee, notwithstanding the fact that some hon. Friends of his were very anxious to prevent it from getting into Committee. He thought that the memory of the Home Secretary must be somewhat defective, because he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) had told the House only 10 days ago that the Metropolitan Board of Works, far from not acting up to their duty, had some years ago directed him to be their mouth-piece in bringing in two Bills, one for the purchase of the Water Companies, and the other for establishing an independent supply. As he had stated, one of these Bills had been read a second time; but the other had failed to reach a second reading, on account of the opposition of certain hon. Members who were interested in the question. Under these circumstances, he did not think the Home Secretary was justified in twitting the Metropolitan Board with not being equal to their duties. They always endeavoured to do their duty, and a very onerous duty it was. They had been exposed to many very serious attacks; but he was happy to say that most of the charges made against them, when they came to be sifted, fell to the ground. For himself, personally, he did not care one farthing about them, as long as the Board over which he had the honour to preside worked together harmoniously. He had been Chairman of the Metropolitan Board during a tenure of office of 14 years in succession. He had been sitting quietly in a far corner of the House because he had no wish to trouble it; but after the remarks which had been made in reference to him by the Home Secretary, he had felt bound to get up and explain his views. He would only say, in regard to the appeal made to the Metropolitan Board by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that the Board were not so foolish as to incur an expense of £15,000 in promoting a Bill when they did not know where the money was to come from.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not propose to detain the House for more than a few minutes. I must say that I do not think the time of the House has been wasted, because there is a most important principle at the bottom of the Bill, and it is the real principle which it appears to me ought to decide the second reading of the Bill. That principle is, how far it is competent for this House to vary a Parliamentary bargain? It is a question of vital importance for all towns to know whether powers which have been given by Parliament can be revoked by Parliament without compensation. That is a question which is not only of interest to the inhabitants of the Metropolis as consumers of water, but is of very vital interest to the whole country. I am sorry that my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary is not in his place, because I noticed that my right hon. and learned Friend, in the answer which he made lately to a deputation which waited upon him, used words which seemed to imply that if Parliament had made an improvident bargain we might revise that bargain. Now, Parliament never does make a bargain except it is more or less of an improvident nature; that is an unfortunate habit that Parliament has. My vote will be determined by the consideration of what the question is which will be submitted to the Committee. If the submission to the Committee is the question of establishing a new arrangement between the consumer and the seller which will be equivalent in value to the old Parliamentary title, then I do not see any objection to this Bill. But if, on the other hand, it is to determine what would be fair and equitable between the consumer and the Water Companies, without regard to the Parliamentary title of the Water Companies, then I should say that that is a question which ought not to be relegated to a Committee, but should be raised on the second reading of the Bill. I therefore wish to ask my hon. and learned Friend the Recorder of London (Sir Thomas Chambers) this question—what is the intention of the promoters of the Bill? Do they intend to cheapen the water supply—a most excellent object if it could be attained, but which might possibly bring the promoters into conflict with rights already conferred by Parliament—or do they intend to introduce a new mode of measuring water, so that the present rights of the Companies shall remain intact?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that, as a direct appeal had been made to him, he felt bound to take notice of it. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had implied, in the first place — indeed, he had directly stated—that he (Mr. Ritchie) had been the inspirer of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in the attack he had made on the City of London in reference to this Bill. Now, the Home Secretary might be a very good shot sometimes, but certainly he had missed his mark upon this occasion; because the communication he (Mr. Ritchie) had had with the noble Lord, who was capable, as he need hardly tell the House, of inspiring himself, was upon an entirely different point, and had nothing whatever to do with the Water Question. The right hon. Gentleman had challenged him to express his opinion upon this Bill, and to state what he intended to do. It so happened that his name was one of those which appeared on the back of the Bill; so it was, *primâ facie*, quite obvious that he should vote for the second reading of it. All he desired to say was this—that when he was asked to put his name on the back of the Bill he gave his consent simply upon a particular point—that the present system of water supply was, in his opinion, not a good system for supplying consumers with water, and he thought the meter system was the better system of the two. But he had not had the remotest idea that anything like confiscation was involved in the Bill. Neither had he the remotest idea of confiscation now. The reason which induced him to put his name on the back of the Bill was, as he had said, that, in his opinion, the meter system was the better system of the two, and that was the only principle he was going to vote for in voting for the second reading of the measure. He considered that the price inserted by the Corporation in the Bill was a totally inadequate price; and he entertained very little doubt that a Committee of the House of Commons would take care, on investigating the provisions of the Bill, that they would not pass any measure which bore upon the face of it the stamp of confiscation. That was all he desired to say in answer to the remarks which had been made by the Home Secretary, and he should certainly vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. WIGGIN, who spoke amid continuous interruption, said, that he did not often trouble the House; but he considered it necessary that he should do so now. If he did so now it was because he had made several attempts to rise in order to express his surprise and astonishment that a good old Tory Corporation like that of the City of London should venture to bring in a Bill of this confiscating character. He very much regretted to find that the Home Secretary and the Government were going to vote for the second reading of the Bill. In the interest of the water consumers of London he believed it would be a most unfortunate thing for the measure to be read a second time. It was incredible to him that Parliament should lend its sanction to the introduction of a system which would so largely increase the cost of distributing water; and however the provisions of the present Bill could cheapen the supply to a consumer he could not possibly understand. If they decided upon introducing this system it would be found necessary to expend an enormous amount of capital in the purchase of meters, which were very costly and expensive pieces of machinery. A water meter was very different from a gas meter, which cost only a few shillings; and to supply meters to the consumers of water would entail an enormous expenditure. On these grounds he opposed the Bill; but there was still another ground upon which he considered it unadvisable to pass the second reading—namely, the ground of sanitary improvement. The adoption of a system of supplying water by meter would compel the people very materially to reduce the consumption of water; and he asked the House to recollect what had made London one of the healthiest cities in the world. He had no interest, direct or indirect, in any of the London Water Companies; he had no connection with them in any shape whatever—[*Cries of* "Agreed!"] Hon. Members might interrupt him as much as they pleased; but he was determined to stay there until midnight, in order to say what he meant to say. He was unacquainted with any Water Director in London, and he had no interest in any Company. But he certainly did not think that the people of London had given full credit to the London Water Companies for the magnificent water supply they now possessed. It was no easy thing to supply 4,000,000 people with a constant supply of good and pure water; and the fact that it was done in so satisfactory a manner reflected the greatest credit upon the gentlemen who had succeeded in doing it. He had no doubt that the water system of the Metropolis might require alteration in some respects; but, at the same time, let them give credit where credit was due, and he hoped the House would put its foot down firmly in opposition to all schemes of confiscation like this.

SIR THOMAS CHAMBERS said, he only rose to answer a question which had been put by his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) as to what was a fair price. He understood a fair price to mean what, in the estimation of the Select Committee to which the Bill would be referred, would be a fair price as between the Water Companies and the consumers, taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 152; Noes 197: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 33.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

MR. FIRTH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to draw your attention to the point of Order that the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope), one of the Tellers for the Noes, who is a Director of a Metropolitan Water Company, and who has a direct pecuniary interest in the Question before the House, has voted in the majority upon the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Vote of Mr. Coope be disallowed."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

MR. SPEAKER: A Motion having been made that the vote of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) be disallowed.—["No, no!"]—I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman to make that Motion—[Mr. FIRTH raised his hat.]—the Question is that the vote of the hon. Member for Middlesex be disallowed. I must, first of all, call upon the hon. Member for Middlesex to rise in his place and make any statement he may please.

MR. COOPE: I beg, Sir, to claim my right, as a Representative of one of the most important counties in England, to vote on this occasion. I am not aware why I should be prevented from doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will now please withdraw.

[Mr. Coope then withdrew.]

Viscount FOLKESTONE: I wish, Sir, to call your attention to this point in connection with the question now raised by the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth). The hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope), as I understand, did not vote at all; his name is not included in the numbers brought up to the Table. I wish to know how that will affect the question? The hon. Member was simply one of the Tellers; therefore his name is not included in the Division List.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member (Mr. Coope) was one of the Tellers in the Division. The Question is that his vote be disallowed.

Mr. GORST: I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to ask you a question. The Motion is that the vote of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) be disallowed. That vote is not counted in the number of Noes. I should like, therefore, to know what will be the result in the event of the House deciding that his vote be disallowed; how will the House proceed?—because his name does not appear in the Division List.

Mr. SPEAKER: The way in which I would put the Question would be that the vote of Mr. Coope be disallowed.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Upon this point I would like to remind the House that the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) has stated from his place in the House that he voted in the late Division in his capacity of Member for a county largely affected by the Bill which was under consideration by the House, and not in the capacity of a Director of a Water Company. The House will see that that statement could only be made by a Representative of a Metropolitan constituency. Of course, it would not be a valid statement if made by any hon. Member unconnected with the Metropolis. I submit that the House should, in justice to the hon. Member, accept his statement, and not cast a needless reflection upon him by disallowing his vote.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the question which has been raised is one upon which it would be a great advantage to the House if we could have the ruling of Mr. Speaker. It would be of great advantage, Sir, to have your ruling as to how far, and under what circumstances, the votes of Members ought to be disallowed. I would also like to ask whether, under the circumstances, the challenge ought not to have been made at the time that the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) was named as a Teller; because the difficulty which has been suggested by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) is certainly a difficulty which would be very serious if we were told that the vote was to be disallowed, when, in point of fact, the vote has not been counted. I think the objection ought to have been taken at the time the hon. Member was named by you, Sir, as a Teller. I should be glad to know what your ruling is.

Mr. SPEAKER: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that, according to precedent, the objection was taken at the proper time. With reference to the larger question raised by the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that there is a distinction, which it would be well for the House to bear in mind, between Private and Public Bills —Bills, that is to say, of a private nature, and Bills which involve questions of great public policy. I am quite aware that, technically and in form, this Bill is a Private Bill, but it involves great questions of public policy; and I can find in the Journals no instance of a vote having been disallowed on a Public Bill. There are instances of votes having been challenged; but in no instance has a vote been disallowed. Under these circumstances, it will be for the House to decide what amount of direct and personal interest the hon. Member for Middlesex may have in the question, and whether his vote ought to be allowed or disallowed.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: May I venture to mention to the House what I believe is a fair precedent in this matter? It occurred no longer ago than the last Session of Parliament. The question before the House, if I remember right, was the confirmation of a contract made between the Post Office and the London and North-Western Railway Company. The vote of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) was challenged upon that occasion because he was one of the Directors of the London and North-Western Railway Company. The result was that the vote was allowed.

MR. NEWDEGATE: Surely it must be shown, if the vote of a Member upon a Private Bill is to be disallowed, that the Member in question has a predominant and personal interest in the matter under consideration. If the House, on a great public question, which this is, proceeds to disallow the votes of leading members of large Companies—Companies which provide essentials of life to large communities—I wonder where the process is to stop. Shall we come to this—that on any question affecting the produce of land large landowners are to have their votes disallowed? I do not see where the process is to stop. It appears to me that this Motion has been made without reason assigned. I await the explanation of the hon. Mover.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I cannot wonder that my hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Firth) should have made this Motion, because the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) has spoken on two occasions in this House as Chairman of a Water Company, and has on each of these occasions stated that he was Chairman of one of the Water Companies, and that he was largely interested in the Company. I cannot, under such circumstances, wonder that this Motion has been raised. But, as my hon. and learned Friend has gained his object by calling attention to the matter, I would recommend him not to divide the House.

MR. FIRTH: With the consent of the House, I would like to withdraw the Motion.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Mr. Speaker, on the Question that the Motion of the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) be allowed to be withdrawn, I wish to say a few words. Hon. Members on these Benches are determined that the Motion shall be put to a Division. Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to respectfully point out why it is necessary that the House should pronounce an opinion on this question. In the very lucid exposition you have just made of the law of the House on this matter, you pointed out that this Bill was partially of a public character; but you did not traverse the general principle that, according to the immemorial usage of this House, established by several precedents, no Member has a right to give a vote on any question in which he is directly or pecuniarily interested. I wish to submit to the House that the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) is directly and pecuniarily interested in the question on which he has given a vote. One reason urged against the Bill, alike by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), was that it interfered with the price which was charged by these Water Companies for their water. If this Bill had passed, it would probably, according to the opinion of those who opposed it, have seriously reduced the price which was charged for the water supplied by these Companies; and, therefore, it would have depreciated the property of the Companies. Does anyone suppose that, if this Bill had been read a second time, the shares of the Companies affected would not have fallen very considerably to-morrow, and that the dividends which would have been declared by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Coope) and the other Directors of the Companies at the next half-yearly meetings would not have been seriously diminished? If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Coope) be the Chairman of one of the Water Companies affected, as he says he is, we may reasonably assume he has a large number of shares. If he has a large number of shares, and if his shares would have been depreciated in value by the passing of this Bill, I have, I think, clearly proved to the House that he has a most direct and large pecuniary interest in the question on which the House has voted. For these reasons, I and my hon. Friends are determined to test the feeling of the House upon this question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the argument of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) proves a great deal too much; because, according to his argument, anybody who is a shareholder, or in any way interested in the Water Companies, would be precluded from giving a vote. My hon. Friend the Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) holds a prominent position in connection with the Water Companies; and it was in consequence of that, no doubt, that he took the leading part he has done in advocating the case, not of himself personally, but of those whose Representative he is. I do not know what my hon. Friend's personal interest in the Company may be—very probably it is not so large as that of many others for whom he is Trustee, and on account of whom he is bound to make the best case he can when their interests are assailed. I think that the course which is proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and which the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) acquiesces in—namely, the withdrawal of this Motion, after having called attention to the vote of my hon. Friend (Mr. Coope), is a course which the House will entirely approve; and I shall be very sorry if the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Firth) is prevented from taking the step which he himself is ready to take, and which, I think, will be in accordance with the general feeling of the House.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Mr. Speaker, on a point of Order, I wish to ask you whether the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), having moved that the vote of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) be disallowed, is not bound to tell in the Division?

Mr. SPEAKER: He is not bound to tell. He wishes to withdraw the Motion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 36; Noes 235: Majority 199.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (PARK RAILWAY AND PARLIAMENT STREET IMPROVEMENT) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY said, he did not rise for the purpose of offering any observations of length, nor was it necessary he should trouble the House with any expression of opinion as to the merits of the Bill. The Bill, however, contained clauses which came in conflict with one of the Standing Orders of the House; therefore it was incumbent upon him to offer some explanation with regard to that clause, and to the action he had taken. The 83rd Standing Order was as follows:—

> "The Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means shall be at liberty, at any period after any Private Bill shall have been referred to a Committee, to report to the House any special circumstances relative thereto which may appear to him to require it, or to inform the House when, in his opinion, any opposed Private Bill should be treated as an unopposed Private Bill."

Now, the 58th clause of the Bill empowered the Department of Public Works to make an expenditure of funds in furtherance of the Bill. Under the circumstances, he thought it his duty to put himself in communication with the promoters of the Bill; and he had received from the agents a letter in which they informed him that they were instructed to withdraw the 58th clause when the Bill went to the Committee. He was also further informed that there was no contract between any public Department and any of the parties promoting the Bill. Under these circumstances, he had not thought it necessary to make any Report to the House. He had, however, felt it his duty to explain, before the discussion proceeded, why he had not made a Report.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, that, before this Bill was read a second time, he was entitled to some information, not only from the promoters of the Bill, but from the Department of Public Works. This was a measure to which the House ought to give its serious attention. Under Clause 11 power was given to the First Commissioner of Works to purchase land to the value of £250,000; but the land was not detailed; it was not specified how much land was to be taken. It was merely set forth, in a vague way, that as much land as the First Commissioner of Works could obtain for £250,000 he was to be entitled to purchase under this Act. Was there any agreement in writing as to how much land was to pass to the First Commissioner of Works under this scheme? In the case of an ordinary Railway Bill, or in the case of the formation of any public Society, it would be necessary that some agreement should be in view. If there was an agreement in this instance, it ought to be laid on the Table of the House, in order that hon. Members might know whether they were justified in assenting to the proposed large expenditure of public funds. The Bill contained many objectionable features. The Company were not required to complete their works for five years, so that for five years the work of construction might be going on, the Parks might be interfered with and their beauty destroyed, and the public convenience might be largely sacrificed. What was this Bill to do? Where were the great centres of population it had to connect? Anyone who looked at the plan would see that part of the line passed through Her Majesty's Parks, in which there was to be no station. The Board of Works, he understood, in giving its sanction to the construction of the line, stipulated that there should be no station in the Parks, and that there should be no ventilators or blow-holes. But what guarantee had the House of Commons, once the Bill was passed, that the travellers by the railway would not come down to the House, declare that they were being suffocated, and demand that ventilators should be opened? How many stations were there to be on the line? The stations were to be a mile distant from each other. How long after the line was made, if it was made at all, would they have a deputation coming down to the House asking that a station should be opened in the middle of Hyde Park? The Bill did not contain a clause providing for such a station; but there was no guarantee that in future there would not be an agitation got up in favour of the construction of stations, which would be fatal to the beauty of the Parks. There did not appear to him to be a sufficient amount of public good in the scheme to justify the House in assenting to it. There was another matter to which he would call attention. A plan of the scheme had been circulated, from which it would be seen that the scheme sanctioned by the First Commissioner of Works, so far from effecting a Metropolitan improvement, left one of the worst and narrowest streets in the Metropolis in its present condition. Furthermore, the access to the end stations of the line would be extremely bad. It was said by the promoters of the Bill that they had informed the Board of Works that they would be willing to join the District Railway Company in constructing a subway from the proposed street to the District Station at Westminster Bridge; but a haphazard statement such as that ought not to be sufficient to cause hon. Members to support the Bill. The promoters of the line also said they would agree to a junction with the District Railway; but what was the use of saying they would agree to a junction when there was not a word about it in the Bill? If these statements were of any value, why did they not find a place in the Bill? He had no personal interest in the matter; but he took interest in the protection of the public Parks from injury. When they were dealing with Metropolitan improvements, they ought to do so handsomely, and not make the egregious blunder which this Bill proposed—namely, leaving a street unimproved, and putting a railway station in a most inconvenient spot. If, on public grounds, the line would prove to be desirable and useful, by all means let it be constructed. The public grounds upon which the line was recommended ought to be fully set forth by the official in charge of the measure; indeed, the House of Commons had a right to demand, more especially as it was suggested to expend a considerable amount of the public funds, that they should be told the reasons why the Board of Works had given their assent to a scheme which, as at present advised, he did not hesitate to say ought to be rejected.

SIR THOMAS CHAMBERS moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. His constituents took a peculiar interest in the proposed railway, which they found open to many very serious objections. The Vestries of Marylebone and Paddington were especially concerned in this matter; and they had come to the conclusion that the line was very badly devised; that it would not form a connecting link between North and South London; that it was a great deal too far West; that it ran through districts in which there were few residents; that it ran very close, indeed, to the Metropolitan District Railway, which was only a little West of it; and that if a line connecting North and South London were to be made, it should start from a far more central point—from Euston Square, for instance, and go straight from North to South. The proposed line would accommodate no street in London, which might be accommodated by a line which really connected North and South. It was intended to run up Edgware Road—there were great objections to that—it then came out and crossed to go under Hyde Park; it did not accommodate Oxford Street, for it only touched an extreme end of that thoroughfare; it did not accommodate Regent Street, or Piccadilly; it did not accommodate Charing Cross; it did not accommodate any one of the great streets of London between the Northern Railway Termini and the Southern Termini. The Paddington and Marylebone Vestries contended that the railway would not accomplish any great good; that it would not accommodate the large mass of the London population, who at present were a long way from the Underground Railway. On that ground it was that they desired the Bill should not be read a second time. On the face of it, it was not a good line, because it did not do what a line connecting North and South ought to do; it did not accommodate Oxford Street, or Bond Street, or Regent Street, or Waterloo Place, or Charing Cross. These were streets and places which wanted railway accommodation; but the proposed line would leave them as much without railway accommodation as they were now, notwithstanding the expenditure of an enormous sum of public money. The next objection to the line was that running up the middle of Edgware Road, as it did, it would completely ruin the trade of the tradespeople in that thoroughfare; the construction of the line would interrupt the traffic for so long a period that scarcely any business would be done. He heard it stated it was intended to do what was now being done in Cannon Street. Of course, it was possible to make a temporary road; but everybody knew that such a road, especially if there was a very large traffic upon it, would not be likely to attract any customers to the houses in the road. No gentleman would drive in his carriage along such a road; so that the Vestries of Marylebone and Paddington were apprehensive that the greater part of the trade in the Edgware Road would be destroyed if the line were sanctioned. He knew that was not a valid argument if the railway would be a good railway, and if it would afford accommodation for that portion of the public which required accommodation. He had no hesitation in saying that when the line was constructed it would be found that a great mistake had been made, and that the line ought to have been made in another direction. Another objection to the Bill was that Hyde Park, the Green Park, and St. James's Park, in which they all took so much pride, were to be handed over to a Board of Railway Directors. Though he was aware the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had satisfied himself that the precautions he intended to take would prevent any permanent injury being done to the Parks, he (Sir Thomas Chambers) considered the experiment was a very dangerous one. He maintained that if it could be shown, as he believed it could, that the line was ill laid out, that it ought not to run near the Parks, but in a totally different direction, that it ought to accommodate a very different class of people to that the proposed line would accommodate, the construction of the line ought not to be assented to by Parliament. It could not be gainsaid that the Parks must be injured if this scheme were permitted to be carried out. Some of the turf must be removed, and the turf laid down upon the completion of the line would never be of the same colour as the turf which had been undisturbed. In many respects this railway would not accomplish the object it was intended and designed to accomplish. The real truth was, the improvement of Parliament Street was at the bottom of this scheme. Much disappointment had been expressed with regard to the purchase of property there. A new War Office could not be erected there; therefore this scheme had been allowed to spring into existence. It was wrong to inflict upon Railway Companies the cost of making great public improvements; and for this reason, in conjunction with those he had enumerated, he should be glad if the House would refuse to send the Bill to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Thomas Chambers.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, I think I need hardly assure the House that if I had the slightest idea that this scheme would effect any injury to the Parks, in the manner suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Thomas Chambers), I should never have given it the countenance of the Department over which I have the honour to preside. I feel very strongly the responsibility I have in regard to the Parks in London; but, independent of my official position, I should be the last person in this House to do anything to injure them. I can assure the House, therefore, it is only after most careful consideration, and after consultation with the permanent officials of the Parks, who are responsible for the beauty of the Parks, and who will feel the whole brunt of the popular feeling if in two or three years it should turn out that the Parks had been damaged, that I have come to the conclusion that there is no reason to be alarmed on this subject, and that this Bill may safely be allowed to pass. I may remind the House that the question of a railway tunnel under the Parks is not a new one. Two years ago I had to consider a proposal to construct a railway, partly under Regent's Park and partly under Victoria Park, Parks quite as important to the residents in the neighbourhoods as Hyde Park and St. James's Park to the people in the West End. I then came to the conclusion, after looking at the congested state of the districts affected by the Bill which was then introduced, looking to the communication which the Bill would afford between the different districts, and looking also to the great expense incurred by Railway Companies in tunnelling under the streets and in acquiring property, it was not wise for the Government to impose an absolute veto upon the construction of railways under the Parks; but that, on the contrary, it would be expedient to permit the construction of railways under the Parks if harm to the Parks could be prevented. I required that the Company who proposed to make the line under Regent's Park should make it wholly in tunnel; I also required that they should carry out a great public improvement affecting Regent's Park as a condition of giving them permission to make the railway. These conditions were approved by Committees of both Houses of Parliament, and I have never heard that the public took any exception to them. The Bill eventually passed into law, though, owing to many reasons, the line has not yet been constructed. In the same way, when this question now before the House came under my consideration, I came to the same conclusion with regard to it. I think no one can look at the map of London without seeing that further communication is necessary between North and South, and that it will not be long possible to resist a railway going under Hyde Park or the Green Park. I came to the conclusion that such a scheme might be assented to subject to the conditions which I have laid down, and which have been accepted by the Directors of the Company. These conditions are four. In the first place, the railway is to be made wholly in tunnel; secondly, the tunnel is to be of such a depth that at no point of the line shall there be any noise heard, or vibration felt, on the surface; thirdly, no ventilators or air-holes of any kind are to be made, either now or in the future; and, lastly, the construction of the work is to be effected in the winter months, and in such a manner as may be approved by the Department of the Board of Works. I am informed by Sir John Hawkshaw, the engineer of the line, that there will be no difficulty whatever in complying with these conditions. He asserts, in the most positive manner, that when this line is completed it will not be possible for anyone on the surface to say there is a railway underneath. [Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Oh, oh!] The noble Lord must know that if the Committee to whom this Bill is referred are not satisfied on that point it will be quite competent for them to say the line must be made at a greater depth; indeed, I have reserved to myself power to insist upon a greater depth, if, on hearing the evidence given before the Committee, I consider it desirable. Sir John Hawkshaw further assures me there will be no difficulty in ventilating the tunnel without air-holes. ["Oh, oh!"] He states it would be easy to do so if the line is made on that understanding. Of course, it will be said that the District Company have been obliged to come for power to make blow-holes; but Sir John Hawkshaw says there is all the difference in the world between making a line with a certain ventilating system and applying that system to a line already made. At any rate, Sir John Hawkshaw undertakes to say there will be no difficulty in ventilating the line without air openings. He says ventilation may be effected in one or two ways—either two separate tunnels, running side by side, may be made, or else the foul air may be pumped out by stationary engines. Whichever plan is adopted, Sir John Hawkshaw says there is not the least doubt of proper ventilation being secured. All these are matters, however, upon which the Select Committee will have to be satisfied. There remains the question of the construction of the works. I am assured they can be effected in the winter months. It is perfectly true that portions of the line will be constructed by open cuttings; but these will be covered up temporarily with timber, sods being placed over, so that during the construction the surface of the Parks will be little interfered with. This, also, is a matter for the Committee to procure evidence upon and to decide. If they do not feel satisfied with the arrangements proposed, they will take what course they think best. On these conditions, I have felt it to be my duty to give the assent and the weight of the Government to this Bill; but, further, I have made it a condition of the assent of the Government that the Company should carry out a very important improvement in Parliament Street. My hon. and learned Friend behind me (Sir Thomas Chambers) said it is unprecedented for an improvement of this kind to be made a condition of the construction of a line; but, as I have already pointed out, I made conditions of a similar kind in the case of the railway for which Parliamentary powers were obtained a year or two ago. [An hon. MEMBER: That line has not been made.] No; the line has not been made, but the principle laid down is the same. I think anyone who looks at the plan will see that a station cannot be placed in Parliament Street until the land there is laid out afresh; therefore, it did not appear to be unreasonable to make it a condition that the Company should make this improvement. The improvement suggested by the Government to the Metropolitan Board of Works last year has been estimated to cost £200,000; but when the Government refused to continue the coal dues for the purpose of defraying the expenses, that project was abandoned by the Board. It is evident that the improvement is not one that the Government can effect out of the Imperial Funds. I do not, therefore, think there is much chance of its being carried out, unless it is by some scheme like this before the House. The improvement will be a most important one. It involves the widening of Parliament Street, from the New Public Offices to the open space in front of the Houses of Parliament; and when that is done Parliament Street will be one of the finest and most important streets in Europe, affording a magnificent approach to the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. The Government have property behind the existing Parliament Street of the value of £270,000. A large portion of that is lying idle, and the remainder is let at very inadequate rents. The value of this land cannot be realized until an improvement, such as that contemplated, is effected; consequently, the effect of the construction of this railway will be that the Government will be enabled to realize the value of the property. I have reserved the right, on the part of the Government, of taking the value of this land in new frontages in the new street. It seemed to me that it was a wise thing to make this claim, for the reason that the Government may want land for Public Offices, and this will give them very fine frontages for the purpose. For my own part, I do not believe that this will be a very onerous obligation to the Company, because it is obvious that they will require a considerable portion of the land at the back of Parliament Street for their new railway station; and, moreover, the bringing of the railway to that point will add to the value of the land, and make it more easily saleable. I think the House will be of opinion, on the whole, that I have not made a bad bargain. In the first place, a great and important improvement will be effected without cost to the ratepayers of the Metropolis; and, in the second place, the Government will be able to realize £270,000, the value of the property which is now lying idle, or for which inadequate rents are being paid. I do not propose to deal at length with the question raised by my hon. and learned Friend (Sir Thomas Chambers), as I conceive it be a matter for the Committee—I mean as to whether it would not have been better to have laid out the line differently—to have taken it further Eastward, to accommodate Oxford Street, Regent Street, Piccadilly, and Charing Cross. My hon. and learned Friend objected to the line being taken down the Edgware Road, on the ground that it would ruin the tradespeople there; and he suggested an alternative route. I do not think an acceptable alternative route could be suggested without going further Eastward; and the effect of going further Eastward would be to cause even a greater outcry than that raised against the Edgware Road route. I think the route selected is a very proper one; but, at any rate, these matters are questions for the Committee. I felt that this Bill involved a very important public question—a question much more important than the questions generally involved in Bills dealt with by Select Committees. I think, therefore, it is only reasonable that the scheme should be considered by a Committee, formed in a somewhat different manner to ordinary Committees—that is to say, by a Committee empowered to entertain all Petitions presented to them, and to enter into all questions which may be submitted by parties interested, without being limited to questions which are brought before them by counsel. If the House should read the Bill a second time, I should be quite prepared to assent to the proposal to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee, with power to hear all Petitions, either by parties themselves or by counsel.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he was sorry to have to detain the House on this question; but he would not do so for more than two or three minutes. He rose for the purpose of seconding the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Marylebone (Sir Thomas Chambers); and at the outset he wished to state that this was the first time he had ever taken part in a Motion for the rejection of a Private Bill. Well, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works was a very efficient and capable public official; but it seemed as though on this occasion his zeal had outrun his discretion. The great majority of the public, as well as of the House, were under the impression that the railway was to be constructed wholly in tunnel; for when the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) went with a deputation to the First Commissioner of Works on the 5th of January, the right hon. Gentleman said that, in the first place, it appeared to him it should be an an absolute condition that any railway should be constructed through the Parks wholly in tunnel, and that the tunnel should be of such a depth below the surface of the Parks that there should be no noise or vibration which should inconvenience the public. He (Lord George Hamilton) had relied upon this solemn pledge, and had not been disposed to take any part in the discussion of the Bill. A few days ago, however, a deputation had come to see him, and had declared that two-thirds of the line through the Parks would have to be constructed by open cuttings. He (Lord George Hamilton) could hardly believe the statement, and had answered that there must be some mistake in the matter. He refused to believe the representation that was made to him; but the deputation, to whom he had referred, brought him the plans. He had examined them, and, distrusting his own judgment, had submitted them to one of the most competent railway engineers in London, and that gentleman had assured him that, looking at the deposited plans, which presumably had received the sanction of the Board of Works, two-thirds of the railway would have to be made by what was known as open cuttings through the Parks. Now, what did that mean? Personally, he did not see much objection to the construction of the line, if it could be made in a tunnel all through the Parks; but that could not be done unless there was a certain headway above the top of the tunnel. The fact of its being impossible, therefore, to construct the line through the Parks by tunnelling meant that there was a very small amount of soil between the top of the tunnel and the surface of the Parks. On one point he challenged contradiction—namely, that there was only something like six feet of soil between the top of the covered way and the surface of the Park in one portion of the line; and it was, therefore, certain, if the Bill were allowed to pass, that it would be necessary to construct the line by open cutting, altering the appearance of the Parks very much indeed for the worse; in fact, almost destroying that portion through which the railroad ran. The carrying out of the present plan would necessitate the removal of the Ornamental Water in St. James's Park, in order that an open cutting might be made through its site, to enable the construction of the line to be proceeded with. It certainly seemed to him that this was a very serious risk to run. To his mind, this was not a *bonâ fide* Railway Bill; his great objection to it being that it put the First Commissioner of Works and the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), whom they all knew to be a great railway promoter, in a false position towards each other. The hon. Member for Hythe would, for his Company, have to purchase land for the building of houses; and the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would have to superintend the construction of the railway through Hyde Park. But that was not all. It was true that the Government were to get £270,000 worth of land in a new street. To his mind, they would acquire this at a cost far too heavy to the public; because, although in the Bill the Government were to receive this amount of value from the hon. Baronet and his Company, it would not be so many superficial feet, but so much worth; and the result would be that the First Commissioner of Works and the hon. Baronet would have to bargain with each other as to how much the Government should get. That, he maintained, would still further put the First Commissioner of Works and the Department he represented in a false position. The hon. Baronet might argue with the right hon. Gentleman as to how much land the Company should give the Government, and might find it to his interest to say —"We want a good return for our money. We would let you have a little more land in Parliament Street, if you will allow us to open a few more blowholes in the Parks." The necessity for bargaining of that kind would be very unfortunate; and there could be no doubt that if the improvement in Parliament Street was altogether disassociated with the Government that they would not be ready to give this measure their support. There was another point to which he wished to draw attention, and that was that the sum the Company were to pay the Government—namely, £25,000—was inadequate for the privilege they were to obtain of tunnelling through the Parks, when they considered that the District Railway had paid something like 10 times that amount for the privilege of running a less distance under the Embankment. But there was even something more than this behind. The Board of Trade had pointed out that the railway was not in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, who had stated that in all cases where an underground railway was made it should be a condition of its construction that it should connect existing lines. The proposed railway would not connect existing lines. Moreover, so far as he could ascertain, he did not believe there was any great demand for a railway connecting Paddington and Westmister. A certain number of Members of Parliament, of whom he was one, might be benefited by the construction of this line; but he did not believe that it would carry a large number of general passengers. It seemed to him that he had given good reasons for the rejection of the Bill. Not to put too fine a point upon it, the scheme appeared to him to be a job. A Railway Company was to be employed to carry out objects with which it ought to have no connection. Four years ago the Metropolitan Railway Company got an extension of their Inner Circle, on condition that they carried out certain improvements. He did not know whether the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works was present; but, if he were, he would be able to corroborate the statement that the Board of Works had been pressed either to alter or abrogate the condition originally laid down. From past experience, therefore, they ought to be careful before they accepted a Bill of this kind. The improvements suggested in Parliament Street, under any circumstances, would have to be carried out sooner or later; but, if the present scheme were adopted, it was very possible that they might permanently damage Hyde Park. It was certain that, in order to construct the railway, they would have to remove a large number of trees, and damage the surface of the Parks. He thought, therefore, that it was by no means too strong a course to ask the House to reject the Bill on the second reading.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, he was sorry the noble Lord had not given his facts with greater accuracy, for he regretted that he should have allowed Party politics to influence his judgment upon a matter which chiefly concerned the convenience of the public. The noble Lord had talked about "a job;" but he (Sir Edward Watkin) repudiated any such insinuation. The noble Lord should have known that the Metropolitan Railway Company had carried out their undertakings as to the construction of new streets, and everything else, to the letter; in fact, in one case they had effected a great improvement long before the time which had been specified in their Act for its completion. As a matter of fact, there was no obligation of any kind which had ever been placed on the Metropolitan Railway Company which had not been entirely and honourably carried out; and yet the noble Lord thought it consistent with propriety to accuse the Company of "a job." The noble Lord had accused them of not carrying out their engagements with the Metropolitan Board of Works; but his (Sir Edward Watkin's) reply to that was that it was not true. Who were these gentlemen connected with the Metropolitan Railway? They were 5,000 saving people, who held each, on an average, about £2,000 in Metropolitan Stock, and whose interest was something like £2 a-week. He himself knew proprietors in this railway, which was now such a popular institution, who went every day to and from their work on the line they themselves had helped to construct, and towards which their small capital was now contributed. What did they do last year? They carried 75,000,000 people, 20,000,000 of whom were carried for sums of 1*d.* If hon. Members would calculate that the value of the time of workmen was 6*d.* an hour, and would bear in mind the amount of time and strength saved by rapid transit of the kind afforded by this railway, they would see the enormous saving and the enormous benefit conferred on the workmen of London by the Metropolitan Railway. Hon. Members would find, if they went carefully enough into the calculation, that, practically, by taking the workmen to and from their work in this manner a present had been made to them equal to their ordinary house rent. He contended that these Metropolitan shareholders, with their £2 a-week of dividend, had conferred immense advantages on the working classes, and had done more to house them properly, and to minister to their convenience and comfort, than all the cheap philanthropists who were always shouting out about the necessities of the working classes, without doing anything for them, put together. As to the hobgoblins raised up by the noble Lord, they had no existence in fact whatever. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had made careful inquiries, and was perfectly satisfied that everything connected with the undertaking would be secured in his own manner. He (Sir Edward Watkin) begged to inform the noble Lord that he had not suggested the undertaking. It had been suggested to him, and not by him; and the conditions upon which he had consented to have anything to do with it were these. But, first of all, he would inform the noble Lord that he had all his life advocated the giving of Parks and open spaces to the labouring populations of large towns, and that he had been able to effect a great deal in that direction in his own district in past times; and in connection with the railway for which powers were now sought his chief motive in taking up the matter had been to enable the working classes of the Metropolis to obtain better access to the Parks—to enable numbers, who perhaps never, under ordinary circumstances, would see the Parks, to avail themselves of their advantages, and to see the carriages and the people of the better class of life who frequented these places. One of the conditions he had alluded to was that it should receive the approval of Her Majesty's Government; and another was that it should not displease the highest authority in the Realm. It had been assented to in these quarters. It was a Bill to enable workpeople to visit the Parks with greater facility than they could do at present; and, more than that, as the line was to be completed in a dead time of the year, he contended that it was desirable that it should be constructed if only in view of the depressed state of the labour market, and the enormous amount of employment that it would give to the workpeople of the Metropolis.

Mr. GREGORY said, it was generally admitted that more direct railway communication between the North and South of London was desirable; and the question they had to deal with was, whether the particular line under consideration was the right one, or whether a more appropriate one could be found? Residing, as he did, in the centre of London, and being connected with an estate of considerable importance there, he happened to know the difficulties in the way of the construction of a work of this kind through a thickly-populated district. An attempt had been made to establish such a line some years ago; but it failed, in consequence of the fact of the enormous population it would have displaced, and the number of houses that would have had to have been taken at enormous cost. By the present line the only street that would be affected would be the Edgware Road—a broad and open street, but not a very long one. He could not help thinking that the Marylebone Vestry was rather desirous of saving the Edgware Road at the expense of their friends in neighbouring streets in the district, because they sought to drive the line more into the centre of London. The question raised by this Vestry was one, of course, for the Committee. If it could be shown that another line would be better and more feasible than the one proposed, by all means let that be adopted, and let this one be thrown out. The question seemed to him to be a fair one for evidence which a Committee should go into. Let the Committee decide whether this line was not the only one really practicable, having regard to the inconvenience that would be caused to certain shopkeepers and the general public in another place, and to the expense that would be incurred. Let them consider whether the cost of the construction of another line would not be so great as to be entirely prohibitive. Personally, he should be very sorry to be a cause of inconvenience to anybody; but he was afraid that it would be utterly impossible to construct a line from the North to the South through any district without causing inconvenience of some kind or other to some one; and the question to be considered should be how they could best minimize that inconvenience? It seemed to him that the line proposed was one which really caused a minimum of inconvenience; because he did not know any other that could be adopted which would cover less street space. It appeared to him that the proper means of dealing with the question would be by a Committee, who would bestow all the care and attention necessary upon the matter. He noticed that the measure imposed very stringent conditions on the Company in regard to the construction of the line. It made the Company subject to the instructions of the First Commissioner of Works, and it insisted upon the undertaking being carried out within a certain period. He thought the Committee should, if necessary, impose still further obligations upon the Company; and if he might venture to throw out a suggestion to the Committee, it would be that they should put something on the face of the Bill to make it, as it were, a matter of record that there was a bargain to the effect that the Company voluntarily consented to the arrangement that they should, in the future, have no ground whatever for a mitigation of the liabilities incurred by them. He would also say to the Committee that the scheme should be complete in itself once for all—namely, that it should be sufficient in extent and construction for the accomodation not only of the traffic contemplated in the present, but for the traffic which might reasonably be anticipated hereafter. With these observations, he had much pleasure in giving his support to the second reading of the Bill. At the proper time he would move the reference of the Bill to a Hybrid Committee.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he would not detain hon. Members for many minutes on this question; but, as the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had referred to the deputation that he (Mr. Broadhurst) had the honour of introducing to the First Commissioner of Works on this subject some time back, he begged to assure the noble Lord that his observations on that occasion were very brief indeed, and that what he stated was, in his opinion, the feelings of the working people with whom he ordinarily came in contact. His statement had been to the effect that if the railway could be made with a guarantee that no part of the Parks would be permanently injured, it could be made with great advantage to the working people of the Metropolis. He had no interest in the railway, and he was always denouncing and opposing some of the details of these lines. He opposed the ventilators in every possible way, and should do so again if he had an opportunity. He, however, would say this—that there had been no greater advantage conferred on the working people of this country than that conferred by the development of the railway system. In regard to the line in question, it was said it would not largely benefit the working people on account of its route; but he would ask hon. Gentleman to remember that there was no part of a workman's walk to his business in the morning where he needed protection so much as where he had to cross large open spaces. If the House would permit him, he would point out that many and many a score of times had he himself got thoroughly wet between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning in nearly every one of the Parks involved in the Bill; and that in those wet clothes he had had to stand all day, until he reached home at 6 or 7 o'clock at night. Now, what he wished to ask was, could hon. Members conceive any advantage that would be greater to those whom they knew had to walk over the Parks to their work at at cost of almost an hour of time, than to give them the use of a railway which would take them from one end to the other of their journey in 10 minutes, under dry and comfortable conditions? Long ago, in the barbarous days—some 20 years back—he had had to climb the gates, seven feet high, when the Parks were shut; and other men had had to do the same to get home from their work. He had had to climb the gates in the midst of snow, and in the midst of rain; and he had no hesitation in declaring that they could confer no greater blessing on the working men and their families than the bestowal of railway facilities of this kind. They would save many weeks of sickness to the workmen, who now got wet in going to their work; and indirectly, therefore, not only the men themselves, but their families also, would be greatly benefited by the railway. Parliament should encourage railways of this kind in every possible way—they should encourage their construction in every direction, always insisting upon a guarantee against injury to public property, and that the Companies would run workmen's trains at a cheap rate and at reasonable times.

MR. CAUSTON wished to say a word or two as to the building site at the corner of Parliament Street. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had stated that, under this scheme, the Government would be able to realize the value of its land, and that they would have an opportunity of re-purchasing frontages which would be acquired by the Railway Company. The right hon. Gentleman had stated, further, that the Parliament Street site might be wanted for public buildings. Now, he (Mr. Causton) considered that when this site was cleared it would be one of the finest sites in London, if not in Europe; and he thought the House ought to require a definite assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that, when cleared, it would be utilized for nothing else but public buildings. He might be told that at present no new public buildings were required—that was to say, when the building schemes in hand had been carried out. Well, to his mind, the Board of Trade Offices were a disgrace to the country, and they might very well be replaced by a new building on the site in question. The business of the Department of the Board of Trade was considerably increasing, and an enormous amount of additional labour had been thrown upon it by the operation of the Bankruptcy Act; and he threw it out as a suggestion that this was one of the Offices that was really required. Further than that, he wished to throw out the suggestion that they might very well erect a more suitable building for the accommodation of the Prime Minister of this country. [MR. WARTON: No, no!] He was not speaking of the Prime Minister personally; but his opinion was that any Prime Minister of England ought to be better housed, from an official point of view, than he was at present. This was a favourable opportunity for taking the matter into consideration; he threw out the suggestion at a time when it was in the power of Her Majesty's Government to retain a site which, as he had already stated, was one of the finest in London for the purpose.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I will not detain the House more than a moment or two; but I wish to say, in the first place, as to the suggestion last made, that it is a provision in the Bill that the Government shall, in the event of the measure passing, have a choice of the frontages from Great George Street along the widened Parliament Street to the present Government Offices. That is part of the bargain with the Company, and that will enable the Government to take frontages for the purpose to which my hon. Friend (Mr. Causton) has alluded. On another point, I wish to say that the smallest depth between the surface of the ground and the crown of the tunnel arch will be eight feet, so that there will be ample provision against noise and against interference with the grass in the Parks. If, however, the Committee, after taking evidence, should not be satisfied upon that point, other conditions can be insisted upon; but when we remember that the depth between the surface and the crown of the tunnel of the Metropolitan Railway is much less, I do not see that there is any need to be afraid, on the score of inconvenience or discomfort, in regard to the plan suggested for the construction of the proposed railway. No Bill was ever more carefully considered by myself and my Colleagues than this, when it was brought to our notice by the First Commissioner of Works. I considered it myself very anxiously from a financial point of view; and I can assure the House that, in this respect, I conceive it to be a very valuable scheme. I have no hesitation in saying that it would be a great misfortune if it were not allowed to go to a Select Committee, as it has been very carefully considered by us, who are responsible for the interests of the taxpayers and the public in general, and in our opinion it will be a decided national advantage.

Mr. D. GRANT said, his constituents would be very materially affected by the construction of this railway. The line would pass down the Edgware Road, and in its construction those who owned or occupied shops there would be seriously injured. The construction of the line would have the effect of destroying their business, and almost of ruining them. Indeed, they felt so strongly on the matter that they declared it to be a matter of life and death to them. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had stated his willingness and his desire that every protection should be given to those interested in the matter; and what he now was anxious for was that the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin) should give some guarantee to those who were likely to be damaged from a business point of view by the making of the line that they would not be put to great expense in setting their views before the Select Committee. Let the hon. Member give them an assurance that the interests of the shopkeepers would not be jeopardized, and that they would have a full opportunity of bringing their complaints to a fair issue, particularly that this opportunity might be granted to such of them as might be unable to employ counsel to represent them. If the Bill was sent to a Select Committee, it should always be understood that none of those who would be affected by the scheme should be deprived of the opportunity of having their case fully considered.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The object the hon. Member has in view will be effected by referring the Bill to a Hybrid Committee.

Mr. CARBUTT said, the only point he wished to refer to was as to the ventilation of the tunnel. He trusted that, whatever Committee the Bill was referred to, they would insist upon the railway being constructed with a double tunnel, so that each train, by pushing the air before it like the piston of a steam-engine, would ventilate the tunnel through which it passed.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 124; Noes 64: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Mr. GREGORY said, he had a Motion on the Paper to the effect that the Bill, after having been read a second time, should be

> "Referred to a Select Committee of Seven Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection; the Committee to have power to receive all Petitions, and to examine witnesses as to the effect of the proposal on the Parks."

He, however, was told that he should have, in place of this, to agree to a Motion accepted in regard to another Bill.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee be referred to the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he begged to move the following Amendment at the end of the Orders in connection with this Bill:—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that the proposed line be connected with the Metropolitan and District Railway."

Mr. SPEAKER: That Instruction can only be submitted after Notice has been given.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Then, Sir, I now give Notice that I will move this Instruction to the Committee on Friday.

QUESTIONS.

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INLAND REVENUE—PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX (IRELAND)—ASSESSMENTS OF LAND—SURVEYORS OF TAXES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (for Mr. Healy) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the Commissioners of Income Tax or Inland Revenue have directed that Income Tax should be received from the landlords of Ireland in instalments on the rents received during the past two years and for this year also; has the work of the Surveyors of Taxes and Collectors of Income Tax been greatly increased in consequence; have the Surveyors of Taxes got any additional assistance to do this extra work, or is it intended to give them any; have the Collectors of Income Tax got any additional remuneration for the extra labour imposed on them by having to accept the tax in instalments and filling up forms, or is it intended to give them any; and, could he state how long Mr. Smith, Inspector of Taxes in Ireland, has been in the public service, and what reason exists for keeping him longer than the time prescribed by the Rules of the Civil Service Commissioners?

Mr. COURTNEY said: In the years 1880 to 1883 the Collectors of Income Tax in Ireland have been authorized to accept payment of Income Tax from landlords on the actual agricultural rents received from time to time. This has, no doubt, caused a certain amount of additional work to the officials; but it has not been found necessary to give further assistance on this account alone to the Surveyors of Taxes, nor is any such necessity expected; the Collectors of Income Tax in Ireland are paid by a poundage, which covers any extra services which may be required of them. The Mr. Smith referred to has been 37 years in the Public Service; but there is no rule compelling retirement after that period.

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CORK.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the President of the Queen's College, Cork, in one of his late Reports, complains that the students admitted to that College are so ill-instructed in "the ordinary instruments of thought" that they are to be classed into the "instructed and the uninstructed;" how many of the students at present attending lectures in the Queen's College, Cork, are of the uninstructed class; is it the fact that Scholarships are awarded on the principle laid down by the President, in his Report for 1880-81, that—

> "When the number of candidates is less than the number of Scholarships to be competed for, the standard is determined by the knowledge of the lowest candidate;"

if so, are Scholarships so awarded to be continued as a public charge; how many of the students in any of the Queen's Colleges have obtained prizes or Scholarships in any of these Colleges after failing to obtain an Exhibition or any honorary distinction in the Royal University; and, whether, the regulations of the Royal University notwithstanding, there are students in any of the Queen's Colleges holding an Exhibition in the Royal University, and a Scholarship in any of the Queen's Colleges?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member quotes from the elaborate Report of the President of the Queen's College, Cork, for 1880-81, certain detached phrases and parts of sentences which are misleading in the shape in which he presents them. The President's remarks about the unprepared state of some of the students who enter College are directed against the course of instruction in the schools from which they come, and are no more an argument against the Queen's Colleges, than it would be an argument against Oxford if the Vice Chancellor of the University complained that boys came up badly prepared from our public schools. The case is still stronger as regards the sentence which the hon. Member quotes about the Scholarships. I can find no such sentence in the Report. The President (speaking not specially of Cork College, but of any College examining for prizes) says—

> "If the number of competitors is not greater than the number of prizes, or even fall short of it, the standard would be determined by the knowledge of the lowest candidate, unless a predetermined minimum were fixed;"

and he goes on to say that the Council of Cork College have always taken care to fix a minimum which would represent a fair knowledge of the subjects of the examination. As regards students who may have obtained prizes in any of the Queen's Colleges, after failing to obtain an Exhibition or honorary distinction in the Royal University, I have referred the inquiry to Belfast and Galway. So far as Cork College is concerned, the President informs me that he knows of only one such case, and in it the student succeeded in subjects different from those in which he had failed in the Royal University. I have received a letter from the Secretaries of the Royal University, from which it appears that they have no knowledge of any breach of the regulations under which the University Exhibitions may be held.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SUB-INSPECTORS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (for Mr. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state how many Englishmen have been admitted to the Royal Irish Constabulary as Sub-Inspectors within the last five years; what the total number of admissions was; how many of these were Catholics; and, what was the religious classification of those who secured nominations as Sub-Inspectors within the same period?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The total number of gentlemen admitted as cadets during the last five years is 77. Of these, 25 were born in England and eight are Roman Catholics. I am unable to answer the inquiry in the last paragraph of the Question, as there is no record of the religious persuasion of unsuccessful candidates. There certainly have been a good many Roman Catholics nominated since I have been at the Irish Office.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—UNPAID DIVIDENDS.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that there is a large amount of unpaid dividends lying at the Bank of Ireland to the credit of the Irish Court of Bankruptcy in place of being paid out to the proper owners entitled to receive the same; and, if so, if he will take steps to publish the names of the parties entitled to this fund, so that it may reach its rightful owners?

Mr. COURTNEY: There is under statute an unclaimed dividend account of the Irish Court of Bankruptcy; but money is not paid into it until notice has been given to the parties entitled, and more than a year has elapsed without their claiming it. Payments are made from this account to persons who can prove their claims, special facilities being given for the recovery of small sums. The question has recently been raised of giving increased facilities for reclaiming unpaid dividends in bankruptcy in Ireland, and it is now under consideration.

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. M. BROOKS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the appearance in the list of Notices of Motions of the 10th instant of the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill Second Reading, he is aware that a large number of Members of this House have been led to infer, from a statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, that the Second Reading will be deferred till the Representation of the People Bill has been read a second time; and, whether it is his intention to give the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill any priority over the Representation of the People Bill?

MR. TREVELYAN: I think I can only repeat to my hon. Friend the answer made by the Prime Minister on, I think, Thursday last. The Prime Minister then said that he could not fix a day for the second reading of the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill until after the second reading of the Representation of the People Bill.

MR. M. BROOKS: He intimated he did not intend to bring it forward until after the second reading of the Representation of the People Bill.

MR. TREVELYAN: The Prime Minister gave even a stronger assurance. He said till the Representation of the People Bill had passed he would not even fix the day for it.

MR. M. BROOKS: I would only wish to point out some of the difficulties—["Order!"]

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: I wish to inquire why it is put upon the Notice Paper night after night if it is not to be moved until after the second reading of the Representation of the People Bill is passed?

MR. TREVELYAN: I should have understood that the positive assurance of the Prime Minister was sufficient to settle the question.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXECUTION IN KIRKDALE GAOL—THE HANGMAN.

LORD HENRY LENNOX asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence respecting the condition of the hangman whilst in Kirkdale Gaol, waiting preparatory to the execution of Michael Maclean in Kirkdale Gaol yesterday morning; and, whether he will take the necessary steps to remedy such a state of things?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have not yet received any authentic information with reference to this matter, and it would not be right that I should make any statement on it until I have received such information. The noble Lord is probably aware that I have no authority to appoint or dismiss the executioner. That is a power which rests in the local authorities in each case.

MR. KENNY asked whether the Home Secretary had no power to prevent a repetition of the painful scenes which had occurred?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Of course, the Home Office, if occasion arose, might ask Parliament for new powers of that kind. I am only speaking of matters as they stand at present. With regard to the scenes referred to, I cannot admit that in the past anything has arisen which would justify such an application to Parliament, because, in the absence of authentic information, I am unable to report upon the matter.

THAMES RIVER PRESERVATION.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the operation of the Acts for the Preservation of the Thames, and the steps which are necessary to secure the enjoyment of the River as a place of recreation."—(*Mr. Story-Maskelyne.*)

And, on March 13, *Ordered*, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Thames River Preservation that they have power to limit the inquiry to that part of the River Thames above Teddington Lock."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

And, on March 27, Committee nominated as follows:—Mr. HOLMS, Mr. ELTON, Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Mr. WROUGHTON, Mr. WALTER JAMES, Mr. FREMANTLE, Mr. MOLLOY, Colonel MAKINS, Sir ANDREW LUSK, Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR, and Mr. STORY-MASKEYLYNE:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at ten minutes after Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 12th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*First Report*—Public Accounts [No. 98].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Vivisection Prohibition * [134]; Beer Adulteration Prevention * [135].

Second Reading—Disused Burial Grounds [46]; Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment [63], *debate adjourned.*

Committed to a Select Committee—Copyhold Enfranchisement [7]; Yorkshire Land Registries [24]; Yorkshire Registries * [80], and *committed* to Select Committee on Yorkshire Land Registries.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson.*)

[BILL 7.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. WAUGH, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he would give a brief review of the various efforts made over a long period to sweep away the cumbersome system of copyhold tenure, according to the recommendations of various Commissions and Select Committees on the subject. In 1832 a Royal Commission on Real Property made an elaborate Report, in which they pointed out—

> "That one of the great evils of the tenure arises in the multiplicity and uncertainty of customs in different manors. Each manor had for itself a system of laws to be sought in oral tradition or in the Court Rolls, or proceedings of the customary Court kept often by ignorant and negligent stewards; but the great evil which is universally experienced where this tenure prevails arises from the check to improvement occasioned by the conflicting rights and interests of the lord and the tenant. These directly interfere with the profitable enjoyment of the soil, and eventually diminish the public wealth."

They were of opinion that enfranchisement should take place by agreement between landlord and tenant, and that no compulsory enfranchisement would work. Legislation on real property followed on this Report, but copyholds could not be touched by any general law. The Dower Act was passed, but that Act did not affect the customary widow's right called "free bench." The Fines and Recoveries Act dealt with copyholds, but so imperfectly that the cost of conveying copyholds was increased. The Inheritance Act was also passed; but that, again, did not affect customary descents. He had known many expensive law suits arising out of customary descents, irregular and contrary to the course of the ordinary Law of Inheritance. In a recent case a man died entitled to a small estate, partly freehold and partly customary, leaving two sisters. The eldest became entitled to the customary land as customary heir, while the freehold land became theirs as co-heiresses in equal shares; but the younger sister put the elder to a cost of more than £600 to prove her customary right. The Wills Act embraced lands of every tenure; but it was not an unmixed good to copyholders. Testators were apt to leave their freeholds and copyholds to two, three, or four trustees, and when that was the case the lord of the manor claimed a fine and a-half and sometimes two fines for the admission of the trustees, greatly increasing the expenses. It was true that the land subject to copyhold tenure was dininishing to some extent; but under the operation of the Wills Act and the division of tenements the mischief was intensified in the shape of fees to stewards. He might instance one estate where a testator left an estate in Wales to his three sons equally; it turned out that about eight acres of it was copyhold, subject to a fine, certain, of £2 5*s.* to the lord of the manor and one steward's fee, if kept intact; but the steward, as he was entitled to do, admitted each brother to a third, charging them 15*s.* each for the lord of the manor and no less than £7 each for his fees, increasing them 200 per cent, and being a perpetual charge of about 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre on the lands for fees alone. In another case, a small copyhold tenement was subject to a small rent of 3*s.* 6*d.*, and to the render of a hen to the lord of the manor annually. The tenement had been divided into 16 parts. The lord of the manor became entitled to 1-16th of a hen from each tenant, but the steward became entitled to 16 full fees. In other words, his fees were increased 1,500 per cent by the division. It was high time that these practices were put down. He might also give instances of the wrong felt by the seizure of heriots by the lord of the manor. In particular, he might mention a case where a gentleman became a trustee of a marriage settlement, and it happened that about an acre only of the land settled was copyhold subject to heriot. The trustee died. He was a horse racer. He had a stable of valuable horses. At his death the lord of the manor came to seize the best horse, which was worth several thousand pounds; but the stableman having persuaded him that a certain horse was the most valuable, he took it away, subsequently discovering that it was aged and blind in one eye. Various attempts had been made to redress the grievances to which he had referred. In 1838 a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the subject of copyhold tenure, and that Committee recommended that a very short time should be allowed for voluntary enfranchisement, to be followed ultimately, if it became necessary, by compulsory enfranchisement. This was followed in 1841 by the 4 & 5 *Vict.* c. 35, appointing Copyhold Commissioners for five years, and it was anticipated that in that time, by commutation and by voluntary enfranchisement, copyholds would disappear. But from 1841 to 1850 the progress towards enfranchisement was very small; and in 1851 another Select Committee collected a mass of evidence on the subject, and they came to the conclusion that semi-compulsory enfranchisement should be tried, but that after a lapse of three years it should be made compulsory on both lord of the manor and tenant. The Commutation Clauses in the Acts of 1841 and 1852 were found to be inoperative, and in 1858 an Act was passed repealing them; and since 1858 nothing further had been done to expedite enfranchisement. In 1881 he brought in his Bill, founded on the recommendations of 1838 and 1851; but the Bill was blocked. Again, in 1882, he introduced it, and he now presented it with amendment to meet objections then raised, more especially by the hon. and learned Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton). The hon. and learned Member published a pamphlet on the Bill of 1882, condemnatory of the Mineral Clause introduced into that Bill, which had been left out of the present Bill. The hon. and learned Member, on the general question, wrote as follows:—

> "It has long been a general opinion that it is expedient to promote the gradual enfranchisement of copyholds, and to remove that complexity in our tenure's which is the admitted reproach of our law. It is time to do away with the inanities of the 'lawless hour,' and the 'whispering court,' the 'shifting acre' and the 'flying fee simple,' the 'ming land' on which the tenures are so mingled that they can never be known, the ridiculous oath of fealty, suit and service, and arbitrary fines and heriots, 'which add a sorrow to death.'"

The Bill, in fact, was aimed at removing that "added sorrow to death" which the hon. and learned Gentleman so eloquently described. Every Member who desired to simplify the transfer of land and to establish a Land Registry should support the Bill. The chief provisions of the Bill were in the first two clauses, the remaining clauses dealing with details. First, it provided that a lord admitting or enrolling a tenant after December 31st, 1885, should give notice of enfranchisement within 12 months, failing which the land should not be subject to any fine, relief, or heriot, or any subsequent admittance or enrolment. But the lord or tenant might at any time after the date mentioned enfranchise the land under the compulsory provisions of the Acts, incidental expenses apart from compensation to be borne by the lord of the manor. The notice of enfranchisement must be accompanied by an offer to take a certain sum, and that—if accepted by the person to whom the notice was sent—would be the amount of compensation. He had also introduced a clause which would enable a tenant or owner, or a lord, in respect to land rent, liable to a heriot or other manorial incident, to compel the extinguishment of such rent or heriot; but he had not made this compulsory—it was open to either side to get it redeemed. At present there was some doubt about the law on the point; but the wording of the clause made it clear and distinct that every man having or holding land subject to a heriot might get that redeemed. Another matter with which the Bill dealt trenched somewhat on the Ground Game Act. The Saving Clause, which excepted from the operation of that Act any special right of killing or taking ground game to which any person other than the landlord, tenant, or occupier might be entitled, had created many anomalies. In many cases lords of manor had rights to keep up ground game on land to which land they had no right whatever; and in order to prevent any such thing in future this Bill would make the right to game a question of compensation, not of reservation, so that so far as any owner of land was concerned he might give notice to enfranchise the game and pay compensation for it. He would not enter upon further details; but he trusted the House would consent to abolish those anomalous relics of feudalism, which had been so ably condemned by the hon. Member for West Somerset (Mr. Elton) in his pamphlet, and would read the Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Waugh.*)

Mr. ELTON said, he rose to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. In his opinion, the exaggerated charges connected with copyholds to which the hon. Member had referred were due, not to the nature of the tenure, but to the rapacity of the steward of the manor. In fact, the steward had no right, by custom, to charge a greater fee than he was entitled to in the reign of Richard I., which was 3*s.* 4*d.* for admission, besides the value, *quantum meruit,* of any services he might render to the entering tenant. He had always found that if objection was made to the demand of the steward the charge was at once reduced to a proper amount. One great objection to the Bill was that under it the copyholder would have to pay £4 for enfranchisement, which many copyholders could ill afford to pay. In the well-known horse case the lord was deceived by the racer's costume being placed upon an old hack, and he was thus led to choose the wrong animal. In that case, by some rare misfortune, the stables must have been erected upon a small plot of copyhold land in the midst of a large freehold estate. For his own part, he had no objection to these ridiculous customs being put an end to. Without relying on archaic illustrations he might say that a copyholder was a lessee under very restrictive and uncertain conditions, and having a fluctuating rent. Under some of those conditions he could not cultivate his land properly, and he was unable to make the best use of his property. He objected to this Bill on several grounds. In the first place, this Bill was a great deal more than a mere little useful copyhold enfranchisement measure, inasmuch as it proposed to compel enfranchisement and to abolish the jurisdiction of every local Court in the country to which people came by any local custom or tenure. It applied not only to Copyhold Courts, but to Borough Courts, Hundred Courts, and County Courts, in the old sense of the term. The consequence would be that if the Bill passed a multitude of useless and vexatious rights would be called into operation for the purpose of being extinguished. The Bill proposed to abolish all tenures except free and common socage held from the Crown. A great portion of the land of England was held by mesne landlords, whose existence was revealed only by inspecting their charters, but who were practically never seen or heard of. Between the Crown and the actual freeholder of the land there stood this class, having shadowy rights of escheat and jurisdiction. This Bill would awake some 20,000 or 30,000 courts baron, lords of the manor, and seigniors, after the sleep of centuries, who would set going the question as to what the profits of the tenure and the escheat were worth, and he had had personal experience of what were such claims of escheat where railways took land in the North of England. In many such cases, where the right to escheat would not be worth 2*s.* 6*d.*, it was alleged that, owing to the fact that many of the tenants were illegitimate and did not make wills dealing with their copyholds, the rights of escheat were very valuable. Another objection to the Bill was that the Enfranchisement Clause was unnecessary, inasmuch as a vast amount of enfranchisement of copyholds had taken place, and was taking place, and would always take place whenever the landlord and the tenant could agree upon terms. In such cases as these it was the policy of the law to allow people to remain quiet, and not to force them unnecessarily into litigation. There were an enormous number of manors in which the customs were regulated by Private Acts of Parliament, or by decrees enrolled in the Courts of Exchequer and Chancery. In such cases the fines had been so reduced as to cause no inconvenience at all. When the fines were fixed, either by Act of Parliament, by decree, or by custom, he thought the copyhold tenure ought to be allowed to remain. He thought he had shown that a universal compulsory measure of enfranchisement would produce great hardship in a very large number of cases, especially in the North of England. His next objection to the proposed enfranchisement was that it would be effected in the wrong way. He admitted that he approved several clauses in this Bill, which was a hardy annual, and which he had read for several years in succession; but his approval of those clauses was dependent on the introduction of several other clauses which would entirely alter the scope of the measure. There were three ways of promoting the enfranchisement of the copyholder. It might be done by authorizing the copyholder on every admittance to compel enfranchisement, and we might go so far as to enact that every application by a copyholder should compel him to enfranchise. But this Bill proceeded in exactly the reverse way. It proposed that the victim should execute himself, and pay most of the expenses of the proceeding. The Bill threw the initiative on the lord of the manor, and there were no valid reasons for making him the operating party. He thought it would be found that the greater part of the expense, even when there was an appeal to the discretion of the Commissioners, fell, at present, upon the person who made the application; but now it was proposed to shift that burden to the lord. There were, then, two plans—either the copyholder might be the first person to initiate the proceedings, or the lord might be the first person to initiate them. But there was also a third, and, in his judgment, a better plan. The provisions of a great measure like this, for altering the tenure of land in England, ought to be carried into effect by official machinery. They might be enforced by the Land Commissioners appointing Assistant Commissioners to go round the country and to revert to the old scheme, mentioned by the hon. Member, of commuting by district. That scheme was sanctioned by an Act passed in 1841, but it would not work in consequence of the clumsy way in which the clauses of the Statute were drawn. The Assistant Commissioners ought to ascertain how much it would cost to enfranchise each district, and the expense would probably be found to be so large that it would have to be defrayed out of Imperial Funds. Any Bill for universal compulsory enfranchisement, unless it were effected by means of a Government Commission, must cause very great injustice to a large number of copyholders. He had pointed out some injustices, and there was another which he would now mention. Copyholds were divided into two principal classes. Some copyholders had a perpetual tenant-right, while others had a doubtful or precarious tenant-right. In the North of England the copyholders had succeeded in establishing that they had in future perpetual tenant-right. In the East and the Middle of England the copyholders succeeded in the same way in establishing their tenant-right, but on the condition, as a general rule, of their paying large fines. Then there was a small number of copyholders, whom he might call conventionary copyholders, mostly in Devonshire and Cornwall. He wished to refer also to the West of England tenure, where it was unsettled whether the tenant-right was precarious or perpetual; and it would be highly undesirable to revive a controversy which, on account of its enormous cost, was generally left alone. In many cases, perhaps, it might be settled by showing that the fines were uncertain in amount; but in other cases the fines were relatively certain, as, for instance, where the homage or a third person had to determine what they should be. There was one very famous case of tenants for lives in which their conveyances expressly stated that they only held for life, yet the Lord Chancellor of that time determined that they had a perpetual tenant-right or right to renewal. On the Church estates and the estates belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Colleges, the tenants, as things stood at present, had no right of renewal at all. They were a very worthy and prosperous set of men, resembling the statesmen in the North of England and the yeomen in the West. The Bill would abolish that class of yeomen altogether, inasmuch as everybody who admitted a copyholder hereafter must initiate a proceeding which would give him a fee simple. He maintained that the Bill would not only be unjust to the small copyholders, whom it was proposed to charge with a great part of the cost of valuation, and with the very much exaggerated stewards' fees, but also that it would oppress out of existence a small and meritorious class of peasant holders. He objected to the ultimate appeal being made to the Land Commissioners, because they were likely to treat the claims of the copyholders in a way which was not in accordance with the traditions of the law. The chief object of compulsory enfranchisement was to put the matter in such a groove as to give the lord a right to the minerals. With regard to the minerals, he thought a tribunal had been chosen which disregarded the decisions of the Law Courts. The custom of heriots was, he admitted, an absurd one. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Elton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, in the first place, he desired to congratulate the House upon having the advantage of the presence of the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down. The hon. and learned Member's ability and knowledge of the subject were known to the whole Profession, and it was, therefore, a great advantage to have him in the House. The House had listened with great interest to the very able exposition which he had made on the subject—in fact, the hon. and learned Member, he (Sir William Harcourt) was happy to say, was one of the most advanced land reformers with whom he was acquainted. The speech they had listened to only showed the progress they had made upon these questions, when they found the Conservative Member for West Somerset getting up and delivering sentiments which he (Sir William Harcourt) was afraid would shock the right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), whom he saw sitting on the Front Opposition Bench. The hon. and learned Gentleman had also said in a book which he had published that—

> "Our ancestors appear to have been content with this high-prerogative doctrine, this 'skimble-skamble stuff,' to use Hotspur's phrase, notwithstanding that its history was as false as its etymology. They believed, or professed to believe, that all their freehold estates were derived from the caprice or charity of their ancient masters, and deemed it to be the height of a grand and superlative ingratitude to cry aloud and clamour against their lords, who were nothing else but their good and great benefactors. The Englishman is even now too apt to sit 'in the mire of feudalism;' and he has shown himself willing, as long as agriculture was prosperous, to govern himself and his property according to archaic laws and customs—the antiquarian's quarry and delight—which in many cases ceased to be practically useful before the Kingdom of England was established."

He thought everybody was agreed that it was time this "skimble-skamble stuff" was effectively dealt with. The existing condition of things was of no use to anybody. They were no use to the law, and they were very oppressive to the copyholders. He did not understand the hon. and learned Gentleman to condemn compulsory enfranchisement. Indeed, if he were not mistaken, the hon. Gentleman had a Bill of his own for compulsory enfranchisement.

Mr. ELTON: That was a Bill I took an interest in last year.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was sure he might speak of the hon. and learned Gentleman as not an opponent of compulsory enfranchisement. The principle of compulsory enfranchisement had been already adopted by very high authority, and he submitted that the cry of confiscation ought no longer to be heard. He believed this Bill had the sanction of the Land Commissioners, as well as that of the Incorporated Law Society, and, therefore, it could not be said to involve an invasion of the rights of property. While, no doubt, the House would be prepared to give the most careful consideration to all objections that were raised, he suggested that the proper time for their discussion would be in Committee, when these details could be considered more satisfactorily than by the whole House. With regard to heriots, the hon. and learned Member opposite said that the part of the Bill dealing with that subject was unnecessary. For himself he could not controvert the opinion of so great an authority on that point; but, this again, was a proper matter for consideration in Committee. It might be that that part of the Bill was mere surplusage, although he was rather disposed to believe that something more was required than the existing law afforded to get rid of heriots; but, by all means, let them get rid of heriots which involved great inconvenience and injustice. The House had had a very instructive discussion; and it was to be hoped that the hon. and learned Member opposite would allow the Bill to be read a second time, and that either the House, or a Select Committee—which would perhaps be the better course—would have the advantage of his knowledge and learning on that subject, in order to make that a really effective Bill for carrying out the enlightened views on Land Law Reform which the hon. and learned Gentleman had so well expressed.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in supporting the Amendment, asked who demanded that Bill? Not the lords of manors, because they could enfranchise now; not the tenants of manors, because they could enfranchise now; not the public, for not a single Petition had been presented for the Bill. No one, in fact, in England wanted the Bill except the Incorporated Society of Solicitors. It was not surprising that they should promote such a measure, because it would commute stewards' fees into solicitors' fees; and if the Bill became law, the amount of money that would pass into the hands of the solicitors of the Kingdom would be counted by hundreds of thousands of pounds. Those who desired the enfranchisement of their copyhold lands could obtain it under the existing law, choosing the time most convenient for themselves; but if enfranchisement were made compulsory by that Bill, it would come upon many of them at once against their will, and they would be required to pay a large sum of money, which many of them had not got in their pockets. If the Bill were really an object of public importance, the money for attaining it ought to be provided by the public, and not by individuals. He desired as much as the hon. Member who had charge of the Bill to simplify tenure. But it would not be simplified by a Bill of 45 clauses, which no one could understand who had not been trained in the law.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he had listened with pleasure and profit to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for West Somersetshire (Mr. Elton), who must, he thought, have left on the mind of the House a distinct impression that our Land Law system still remained very much what it was called 200 years ago by Cromwell—"An ungodly jumble." He had himself seen, near London, a field ploughed up, and yet the trees in it permitted to stand, to the great detriment of agriculture, because the tenure was copyhold. This was a question which materially affected town communities, especially some of the more thriving manufacturing towns of Lancashire. Take, for example, the town of Accrington, which was, perhaps, the most thriving town in all Lancashire. That town was built almost entirely upon copyhold land. Sir James Caird, who was the highest authority on this subject, had declared that the question of Copyhold Enfranchisement affected town even more than agricultural communities. The Copyhold Courts of Lancashire were generally held in April and October; and although the surrender of a copyhold might take place on the 1st of May, the succeeding Court would not be held till the following October, and the Rule would not be returned to the new possessor until the April of the following year. Thus, under the ordinary circumstances of the sale of copyhold land, eleven months might elapse between the time of the surrender and the taking of possession by the new tenant. It frequently happened that copyhold plots of land, consisting simply of patches of about 500 square yards, were mortgaged, and when the mortgagee died there had to be presented to the jury of the Copyhold Court what was called an inquisition. This jury was generally composed of men without knowledge on the subject, and the chairman of the jury would bargain with the solicitor representing those interested in the land as to how much was to be given to the jury for signing the inquisition, and it invariably happened that that money was spent in drink or in dinner. [MR. WARTON: Hear, hear!] The hon. and learned Member for Bridport might think that an admirable system of land tenure. He did not. The reasons why they ought to make progress with this subject was very evident. He agreed with much the hon. and learned Member for West Somerset said as to the somewhat cumbrous machinery of this Bill. He should have been very glad if the present Bill had been simpler. Sir James Caird, the Chief Commissioner, whose opinion in regard to the compulsory enfranchisement of copyhold carried great weight, said that the measure which he would prefer and which would be the simplest would be that in a term of years, say 30 years, the power of enfranchising copyholds should cease, and that all copyhold lands should then be freehold. That undoubtedly was a very simple method of dealing with the question. For his part, he should prefer to see the period of 30 years reduced to 10 years, and that during the period of 10 or 30 years, as the case might be, either lords or tenants might make use of the compulsory powers of enfranchisement that existed. At the expiration of the period which might be fixed he thought that all copyhold land should become freehold. The great objection he had to the Bill, however, was that it gave no indication of the time at which there would be an absolute extinction of copyhold tenure, and he hoped that in Committee a definite term would be decided on.

Mr. C. S. READ said, that in the County of Norfolk there was still a large amount of copyhold land. He remembered that when the Copyhold Enfranchisement Act was passed it was believed that at the end of 20 years all the copyhold land would become freehold. They had not seen much of the vexatious action of copyhold tenure when the manors were in possession of the landed proprietors in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, however, it had been the custom for many years past that wherever a manor was announced for sale a speculative lawyer came forward as a purchaser, and then the position of copyhold tenants was by no means pleasant. It seemed to him that the lord of the manor was a man of kingly prerogative. No length of time seemed, apparently, to bar his rights. In his part of the country he had this distinct advantage. If there was a piece of copyhold land lying in the middle of the estate, it was for the tenant to prove what portion of it was freehold, and the lord of the manor could claim the best portion of the estate as representing his copyhold. The very pith of the question was to distinguish between what was copyhold and what freehold. As an illustration of the injustice of this Copyhold Law, he might mention that 40 years ago a relative of his had a common allotment made to him of half an acre of land. His relative was a very good farmer, but a very bad lawyer. He concluded that because the other allotments were freehold his was the same. The allotment of half an acre was covered with furze, and its value was about 10*s.* a-year. It was cultivated as a garden, and then his friend proceeded to build a house upon the ground. After he died the lord of the manor came down upon his representatives and compelled them to be admitted as copyhold tenants. The result was that in order to enfranchise this small piece of ground and the buildings thereon the representatives were compelled to pay £200; whereas if it had been known that the ground was copyhold it could at first have been enfranchised for £5 or £10. In a case where the copyhold tenure was fine-certain, he did not think there was anything to complain of in the law respecting it. That was an easy method of recording the title to it, and there was only a small quit-rent to pay. But the great majority of copyholds in Norfolk were fine-arbitrary in their character, and the result was that the lord of the manor, upon the admission of a new tenant, always demanded two years' improved rental. Another curious part of the story was that if the cultivation of a piece of copyhold land was foul or neglected, and the buildings became in any way dilapidated, instead of the lord of the manor receiving the two years' disimproved rental, he maintained that this condition of affairs had been brought about by the waste of the tenant, and therefore persisted, and generally succeeded, in getting two years' rental as if the ground had been in a good state of cultivation. He was clearly of opinion that this copyhold tenure was a great hindrance to agricultural improvement. Farmers and others could not improve or build upon their land without subjecting themselves to an increased fine. It was therefore from the agricultural point of view that he supported the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HASTINGS agreed with what had been said with regard to this Copyhold Law being a considerable hindrance to agricultural progress. He ventured, however, to point out another great social question in which copyhold tenure constituted a distinct hindrance to improvement in respect to its bearing on the transfer and the tenure of land. That question was the housing of the working classes. He was quite certain that wherever land was held under copyhold tenure in the vicinity of growing towns it was a distinct hindrance to the proper housing of the population. He would give the House an instance of this within his own knowledge. A few years ago, within his own constituency, and near a growing town, a piece of land amounting to 10 acres was sold for building purposes. It was proposed to erect on this piece of land houses for artizans. In the course of the building operations the land was divided into 40 quarter acres. When it had been so divided, and when the houses had been erected, the lord of the manor came forward and claimed 40 heriots in the place of the one heriot to which he had been before entitled. He submitted that a system which permitted an injustice of that kind must necessarily operate to restrict, if not prevent, the building operations which were needed for the proper housing of the working classes. He would give another instance of hardship and oppression also taken from his own constituency. A dairyman owned a small piece of copyhold land, and earned his living by keeping three cows. He died and left a widow and three children. His widow was anxious to provide for the children by carrying on the business of the dairy. Before this could be done, however, the lord of the manor came down and seized as heriot the best of the three cows, and the woman was consequently ruined. She became a bankrupt. No doubt this was an exceptional case; but if he had no other reason for giving his hearty support to the Bill of his hon. Friend, this reason, in his opinion, would be sufficient—that it would make a clean sweep of an old and barbarous custom, which was opposed to civilization and the interests of the people. Any system of law or land tenure which permitted oppression of the kind he had mentioned was one which the House ought, in the best interests of the landowners themselves, at once to sweep away.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, if his hon. and learned Friend went to a Division on this matter he should be compelled to support him in voting against this Bill. He was perfectly aware of the difficulties which surmounted the question of copyhold tenure, especially with reference to large towns. In the North of England, where he resided, and where there was a large number of copyholds, no difficulty was experienced. As a rule, the fines were small; and certainly the title was always very clear. With reference to the observation that fell from the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) to the effect that the country people knew nothing at all about the matter, he thought he was correct in saying that the remark had no reference, at least, to the part of England with which he was more intimately connected. He had never heard of the smallest difficulty being felt in the matter. At the same time, he was one of those who would be glad to see the system of land tenure in every way simplified, and the cheaper the law could possibly make this transfer of land the better he thought it would be for all parties. He thought the Bill the House was discussing was a very cumbrous one, and that if it was passed into law he felt sure that the result would be disastrous so far as expense was concerned. He could not agree with the suggestion that had been made that copyholds should become freeholds after a period of 30 years. In that case the promoters of the Bill would really subject themselves to a charge of confiscation. He did not approve any such proposition as that made by the hon. Member for Salford, or Sir James Caird, because he thought it was an invasion of the rights of property. In reference to the provisions of the Bill dealing with the enfranchisement of land, and the disputes that were likely to arise between the tenant and the lord of the manor, he could not conceive anything more likely to create a greater amount of litigation from one end of the country to the other. If there was any body of men who were likely to reap any advantage from the Bill he believed it would be the solicitors who were engaged in settling the disputes. The subject of the measure was of such importance that it should be dealt with, not by a private Member, but by the Government. Such large interests throughout the country would be affected that no private Member could possibly hope, nor should he be allowed, to carry through the measure. And in the event of a Bill of this kind passing, the only way in which the enfranchisement of copyholds could be brought about would be by the appointment of a Commission especially charged with the duty of carrying it into effect; and this Commission should have Assistant Commissioners to go through the country carrying out the work of enfranchisement. If the thing were left to the stewards, the temptation would be too great for them, and the law charges would be enormous. The question of minerals should be made perfectly clear in any Bill of this kind, and they could not take the lord's rights away without giving him compensation; and yet if they came to value them they would find it a very difficult thing to do. If the minerals were to be handed over to the tenant, it might be that he would find himself to pay a much larger sum than he could possibly afford. This question, in short, was left in such obscurity, and would lead to so much litigation, that if his hon. and learned Friend the Member for West Somerset persisted in his opposition to the Bill he should feel himself compelled to vote with him.

Mr. GREGORY said, it had been his lot to deal with copyholds in various capacities. He had officiated as steward of a manor, and he had to act in another case for the tenants. Nothing was more unpleasant to him in the whole of his professional career than the stewardship of a copyhold estate. He got rid of his difficulties, however, in the one case by the enfranchisement of the copyhold, and in the other case by his duties being transferred to another. To some members of his profession, copyhold stewardships might be more profitable than they were to him; but he believed that the majority of gentlemen who held the office of steward would be glad to see copyholds enfranchised on reasonable terms. Objection had been taken to the compulsory powers of the Bill; but by some hon. Members it seemed to have been forgotten that compulsory powers were in existence now. The Bill, therefore, did not embody a new principle in the direction of compulsion. The measure might possibly act prejudicially to small copyholders; but this could be guarded against by the Committee to whom the Bill would be referred in the event of its being now read a second time; and it might be deemed by the Committee desirable to confine the operation of the Bill to copyhold tenure of a certain amount. Attached to many copyholds, particularly to those he was acquainted with in his own county, there was a peculiar tenure, known as borough English, by which an estate descended to the youngest instead of the eldest son, and it created very considerable difficulty. Supposing a gentleman who held an estate partly freehold and partly copyhold died intestate, the freehold portion of the estate would go to the eldest son, and the copyhold portion, which might be in the very centre of the estate, to the youngest son. He could not conceive anything that would lead to a prettier family quarrel than the separation of an estate in such a manner. Then, again, fines were difficult to settle, and they led to considerable squabbling and contention in the assessment of them. He did not attach much importance to the stewards' demands, because, as a rule, stewards were not so exacting as seemed to be imagined. If a steward were too exacting an appeal was provided by the Bill. There was another matter dealt with by the Bill, that of quit-rents and heriots. The latter, as was well known, was the right to the best beast of a deceased, and instances had been given him of the seizure of these by the bailiff of the manor whilst the corpse was unburied, and under the very windows of the room where it was lying. It was high time that a custom involving such deplorable consequences should be put an end to. Upon the whole, he (Mr. Gregory) considered the Bill a valuable one, and he hoped it would be referred to a Select Committee competent to deal with all the questions which might be raised. He was prepared to vote for the second reading of the Bill, in the hope that they would be able to put copyholds upon a fair and reasonable footing, that they would be able to abolish the system of heriots, and that they would be able to get rid of the objectionable tenures which many copyholds involved.

Mr. DODDS said, that on every occasion when Bills of this description were introduced they had been brought under the consideration of the Incorporated Law Society, which made suggestions for their improvement, and he believed that the present measure had the approval of the Society, at all events in its main principles and provisions. A great portion of the property in the County of Durham was of copyhold tenure, held under the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and in respect to such property it was found that the cost of conveyancing was a great disadvantage. He had enfranchised under the existing system several copyholds, some belonging to himself and some to other persons, and he believed that a necessity did exist for the Bill of the hon. Member for Cockermouth. He, therefore, hoped that it would be read a second time, and would then be referred to a Select Committee, by whom the details could be satisfactorily settled.

Mr. TYSSEN AMHERST said, that, while he did not consider himself justified in opposing the Bill, he was of opinion that the proposed changes would not benefit the tenant; indeed, it would be a great hardship on him at the present moment to be called upon to meet the necessary expenses. This was not a Bill to promote enfranchisement, but to compel it. As the law stood at present, it was in the option either of the lord of the manor or of the tenant to compel enfranchisement. He, therefore, held that a great deal of the Bill was entirely unnecessary. Why should it be made compulsory on both parties to enfranchise whether they considered it for their own interests or not? One of the principal reforms of recent legislation with regard to land tenure was the simplification of title; but one of the best registrations of title was that of copyhold tenure. Again, the tendency of recent legislation was to relieve the present tenant for life from burdens; whereas the effect of the Bill would be to increase the burdens to which he was subjected. It appeared to him that there would be endless litigation under the Bill when it came to a matter of questioning rights.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he could not share in the view of the Home Secretary that this was a measure which could be objected to only as regarded details. A good deal of the very able speech of his hon. and learned Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill was very properly directed to matters of detail; and, no doubt, should the Bill proceed further, a great deal of attention would have to be given to such questions. But the hon. Member who had introduced the Bill had wholly failed to show that any person in the position of a copyholder who desired to be relieved from that *status*, and to acquire his estate in fee simple, was unable to do so under the existing law. He ventured to think that the object of Parliament ought to be to simplify procedure and diminish costs. This Bill, however, would largely increase costs. With reference to the question of minerals, the Bill of 1882 distinctly reserved the right of a lord of the manor to come upon the land dealt with under the Bill to search for and, if need be, to work minerals on payment of the proper compensation to the tenant for so doing. He should like to know why that clause had been omitted from the present Bill? The fact of its omission had not unnaturally created some anxiety in the minds of those who had a shrewd suspicion that there was something underlying the scheme which the House knew nothing about. He had heard it suggested that the clause had been left out in consequence of, and in deference to, the suggestion of those who were interested parties; and he should be very glad to have that impression removed. Why should the lord and the copyholder be compelled to enter into expensive proceedings? If either party could, at his own instance, set the machinery of the existing law in motion, who was aggrieved by the *status quo?* Those who might take advantage of the opportunity of benefiting themselves by the scale of fees were, as far as he could see, the only persons who were interested in the promotion of the Bill. The existing law allowed either party to terminate a copyhold tenure at his discretion; but he could not think why the House should be asked to place obligations on a class of Her Majesty's subjects for no object whatever except to establish a sentimental uniformity. He hoped the House would not adopt a scheme of this kind.

Mr. WARTON said, he regretted the want of spirit shown by some Members of the House. When a Bill had been shown to be unnecessary, and was altogether weak and absurd, yet they had not the determination to oppose it. There were some people who would not stand up for their own interests, because they were afraid someone would blame them for so doing. The hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. C. S. Read) had argued against the Bill by saying that copyhold was sometimes an admirable tenure, and that the title was simple and convenient; but because he was lord of several manors he stated that he should not vote against it. Valuable property was lost because many hon. Members had not the nerve to stand up and oppose Bills which they knew to be mischievous in their character. The Incorporated Law Society had been spoken of in the debate. That was a Society of solicitors, who would receive the most benefit from the Bill. The scheme was warmly supported by solicitors, because it meant an increase of costs. The prospect must be delightful to the Incorporated Law Society. The entire object of the Bill was "Costs, costs, costs." Even where a mortgage had been given, by this Bill they were to come in and raise a new charge, by compelling the tenant to be enfranchised whether he would or not.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, that the question of minerals, which had been dealt with in the Bill of the previous Session and omitted in this, was one, not only of the greatest importance, but one which was of great difficulty, and had operated to diminish the number of enfranchisements. The law now empowered either party to compel the other to enfranchise the land, and the only explanation of the slowness of enfranchisement was that it was for the interest of both lord and tenant not to enfranchise. The Bill was of an ill-digested and incomplete character. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had told them that Sir James Caird, a great authority on the subject, had put forward a totally different scheme. That seemed a reason for not supporting the present Bill. He thought they had better wait for that. He would oppose the second reading of the Bill, not because he admired the copyhold tenure, but because the Bill did not provide a satisfactory mode of dealing with it.

Mr. W. LOWTHER said, he was anxious to prolong the discussion until the House got an answer from the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Waugh) to the questions which had been addressed to him during the debate.

Mr. WAUGH, in reply, said, if the Bill were sent to a Select Committee he would be able to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite that it would diminish the costs of enfranchisement more than 100 per cent, perhaps 200 per cent in some cases. He did not propose to meddle with the minerals at all; and he might state that he regretted having, in a weak moment, introduced a clause on this subject into the Bill of 1882. Many of the tenants strongly objected to that provision on the ground that it would interfere with their rights. If he was asked why he proposed to interfere with the *status quo*, his reply was the expenses of enfranchisement were so great at present that many tenants were deterred from undertaking it. He believed that the Bill now before the House would meet the general wishes with regard to the whole question of copyhold.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 123; Noes 41: Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 36.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Mr. Tomlinson

YORKSHIRE LAND REGISTRIES BILL.—[Bill 24.]

(*Mr. Dodds, Mr. Charles Palmer, Mr. Barran, Mr. Isaac Wilson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DODDS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the House was aware that a general system of registering deeds had prevailed in certain parts of the County of York for a considerable period, the Acts by which the system was established having been passed in the early part of the 18th century. The first Act was passed in 1703, and related to the West Riding of Yorkshire, and in 1706 an Act was passed amending it. In 1707 its principles were extended to the East Riding of Yorkshire, and in 1734 a similar Act was passed for the North Riding. By the operation of these several Acts a system of registering deeds, wills, and other documents affecting the titles of the property in the principal portions of Yorkshire came into existence; but it was not a little remarkable that none of the Acts applied to the City of York or the district of Ainsty surrounding that City, although these portions were situated in the heart of the County. The Acts were very similar in character, the West Riding being the principal, and the others were subordinated to it. The only important difference between the various Acts was, that whereas in the North Riding it was permissible to register a deed or any other document in full length, or by way of memorial, in the other two Ridings deeds could be registered by memorial only. The laws had remained unaltered from 1734; but it did not, therefore, follow that there had not been great and very general dissatisfaction with these Acts in many particulars. One of the greatest objections to them was that the Registrars were appointed by freeholders whose properties were of the annual value of at least £100, and the result had been that when there were vacancies very considerable expenses had been incurred, and the charges levied were made heavier than were necessary for the proper discharge of the duties of the offices. The Registrars had not had any legal qualifications for the offices; but these offices had become sinecures for members of the principal County families. Another ground of dissatisfaction was that it was necessary that one of the attesting witnesses should attend at the place in the Riding where the deeds were registered to be sworn for the execution of the documents if the parties resided in the Riding or within 40 miles of the Riding. If they resided beyond that distance, then the deeds might be registered by affidavit. Last year the hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. Pease) introduced a Bill dealing with the registration by affidavit and other points, and as far as it went it was satisfactory to the public and to the Legal Profession; but the general feeling was that it did not go sufficiently far, and that when legislation took place some other changes should be effected, especially with reference to the appointments of Registrars. At the instigation of several Law Societies in Yorkshire, he (Mr. Dodds) prepared several Amendments to the hon. Member's Bill, and placed them on the Paper; but owing to the feeling that the old Acts should be repealed and re-enacted, with such Amendments as the change of circumstances and time made necessary, the Bill was not proceeded with. That feeling was increased by the fact that Mr. Marsden, the late solicitor for the West Riding, and residing at Wakefield, had prepared a Bill for the repeal of the existing Acts, and the consolidation of the whole into one. He (Mr. Dodds) was then asked to take the step he was doing that day; and consequently, before the Prorogation of Parliament last year, he gave Notice of his intention to introduce the present Bill. Steps were taken to prepare it, and during the autumn an intimation was sent to him that the Justices assembled at the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions had determined that they should take up the subject. Under these circumstances, the Law Societies in the North Riding waited to see the course which the Justices would take; and had the Justices dealt with the matter in the way it was thought necessary, probably he should not have been proceeding with the present measure. At the Christmas Sessions he found that a Report from a Committee of Justices appointed in October was presented and adopted by the Justices of the West Riding; but the Justices of the North and East Ridings adopted a totally different course, and in the face of their own Committee's recommendations passed resolutions condemning the proposal to abolish the election by £100 freeholders, and sought to vest it in the County Justices until a county authority should be formed, when it should be vested in that authority. If there was an adequate county authority, he, for one, should not be unwilling to accept it; but he was unwilling to agree to a course which, instead of leaving the appointments to the £100 freeholders, of whom no register existed, would transfer them to the magistrates at the different Quarter Sessions. That would result in the continuance of the appointment of gentlemen highly honourable in every way, but having no legal qualifications for the offices, and in whose hands the offices became sinecures. Under these circumstances, he was again appealed to to complete the Bill; and accordingly this measure had been prepared by the eminent counsel who had prepared the Bill which Mr. Marsden had some years ago promoted at the direction of the Justices of the West Riding, and also the Bill prepared for the Justices of the same Riding, which was rejected by those of the North and East Riding. He believed the Bill had the approval of almost everyone connected with the three Ridings. It was divided into two portions—the first relating to the Law of Registration, and the second to the administration of the law. As regarded the Law of Registration, while there were some not unimportant differences, generally speaking the clauses were very similar to what had existed, and to what had been approved of by the Justices of the West Riding. When the hon. Member for Whitby introduced his Bill last year, it was thought desirable to have a Return from the different Registrars showing the amount of fees received during the preceding 10 years; and that Return gave full information as to the receipts from the registration of deeds and documents in the various Ridings, and as to the expenditure connected with it. The first clause to which he would draw the attention of the House had reference to the memorials. The registration of memorials was the common practice, because they were shorter than the deeds, it being only required that they should give the leading portions of the deed, such as the date it was executed, the names and descriptions of the parties to it, the property to which it referred, and the mode in which it had been executed, the parties by whom it had been attested, and the mode in which it had been attested. When that was done the memorial required to be signed and sealed by one of the parties to the deed, and that signing and sealing was required to be attested by two witnesses, who also attested the same signature to the deed itself; and then came the onerous provision requiring personal attendance, if it was executed in the Riding or within 40 miles of it. Another onerous provision was that the memorial should be on parchment with a half-crown stamp, so that it cost 5*s*. The whole charges practically amounted to about, or a little more than, £3. In the Bill it was proposed that the memorial should be written upon a sheet of paper and attested by one witness, and that when that was done it should be sent to the Registry by post to be entered. If that was adopted, it would reduce the total charges to about £1. That seemed a small sum in the registration of deeds in any large transaction; but when they came to cases such as existed in that portion of his own borough, situated within the county of York, and in the Cleveland District, where working men had built for themselves cottages, then, where the cost of the land was from £10 to £20, and the cost of conveyancing was about £5, the addition of £3 for registration was a very heavy and serious matter. The appointment of the Registrar not only affected the £100 freeholders, but these working men, who had no voice in the matter. There were some very important provisions with regard to *caveats* and other matters which he would not refer to; but he would remark that some of the clauses had been accepted by all parties. He thought he might say that the greater portion of the first part of the Bill was what, he believed, would be acceptable to the House generally, and would be acceptable to the hon. Member for Richmond (Mr. Dundas), who had given Notice to refer this and the other Bill referring to Yorkshire Registries to a Select Committee; but when they came to the other portion of the Bill they diverged from each other, and proceeded on distinct and different lines. The first point upon which they differed was the principle upon which the Registry Offices should be conducted. He (Mr. Dodds) had come to the conclusion that the best course to adopt would be to ask Her Majesty's Government to make these Registries public offices, instead of, as at present, being vested either in the Registrars for the time being or with the Justices of the Ridings. He desired them to be under the management of the First Commissioner of Works, as the Post Offices and County Courts were. His next proposal was that the person to be appointed to the office of Registrar should in future be appointed by the Lord Chancellor. He supposed it would be said that the Lord Chancellor would make it a "job;" but he did not believe anything of the kind. He had inserted a Proviso that the person selected should be a solicitor of at least 10 years' standing, and must give up all private practice, so as to devote himself entirely to the duties of the office for an adequate salary. He saw no objection, however, to the Registrar holding such a semi-public office as Deputy Clerk of the Peace, or Registrar of a County Court. It had been suggested that a barrister should be appointed to the place; but his objection to giving the Lord Chancellor that power was that it would result in no solicitor being appointed at all. ["No!"] At any rate, it was his experience that barristers were appointed in nine cases out of ten where they could be appointed. His whole object, however, would be gained if the Bill provided that a fit and proper person should be appointed by the Lord Chancellor. He did not object to the hon. Member for Northallerton (Mr. G. W. Elliot) taking the office if he liked. All he objected to was the system which had been pursued. The last election in the West Riding took place in 1863. There was no record of what the cost was; but the belief in and around Wakefield was that it cost something like £20,000. He believed that was very near the mark. The present Registrar was a gentleman who was respected by everyone who knew him, and no more honourable man could be found for the post than the Hon. George Lascelles. His objection, therefore, was not to Mr. Lascelles; it was that he lived near Northallerton, 50 or 60 miles from Wakefield, and was seldom seen at the Registry Office at all. The whole expenses of the office amounted to £1,300; and the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Whitby showed that in some years Mr. Lascelles had received £6,000, so that he had, for a sinecure, netted £4,700, During the 10 years covered by the Return, the amount received in fees, &c., by the Registrar, was not short of £48,000; and, in addition to that, there was something for the building and property connected with the office; but the gross amount of the expenses during that period was only £11,700, so that during the 10 years Mr. Lascelles had netted £36,000 clear for discharging the duties of an office which he had scarcely ever seen. If they took the 10 preceding years it would be within the mark to say that Mr. Lascelles had taken, at least, £70,000 clear in 20 years. Was that a state of things which ought to continue? In the North Riding a contest for the Registrarship took place in 1829 between Mr. Peirse, the owner of a very fine property within a few miles of Northallerton, and the possessor of some of the best collieries in the county of Durham, and Mr. Walton, a solicitor, of Northallerton. The contest lasted for six months, and, after the poll had been kept open for several days, Mr. Walton eventually retired. The cost of the election to Mr. Peirse was not less than £50,000, and the result was that within four years he had to sell the home of his ancestors and all his collieries; his family was almost penniless, and he was thus ruined. The cost to Mr. Walton was so serious that he shortly afterwards became bankrupt. Mr. Peirse only held the office a few years, when, upon his death, his son was elected to succeed him without opposition. In the year 1872 a contest was fought for the office between Mr. Crompton and Mr. (now Sir) George Cayley, and the belief was that they spent several thousands between them. During the 10 years Sir George Cayley had held the office his receipts had amounted to something like £10,500. The total expenses did not exceed £2,900, so that Sir George had netted something like £8,000. He, too, resided 50 miles from the Registry. In the East Riding there had been several expensive contests, and the last Registrar discharged all the duties by deputy, and was Resident Land Agent upon a large estate situate nearly 100 miles from Beverley. Since the last election, however, about two years ago, the office had been held by a gentleman who, to his credit, discharged its duties himself. He thought he had shown that the plan which the Justices advocated was not one which ought to be continued. It was his opinion that the salaries proposed in the Bill were much in excess of what would be required for procuring the services of really competent men, who would give their time and attention to this work solely, or in connection with other offices of a public character. Adequate salaries would be paid, to be fixed from time to time by the Treasury, and to be varied as circumstances required, and the gentlemen appointed would hold office during good behaviour. If any complaint arose against them there would be some person to whom it could be submitted, such as the Lord Chancellor. The question of fees would be left entirely to the Treasury, the Bill merely proposing that the amounts should be sufficient to cover the cost of the offices, including the salaries of the Registrars, but that there should be no surplus left for the Treasury. The offices would be made self-supporting; but, at the same time, those who used the Registers would not be taxed more than was necessary. At present the fees did not average more than 5*s.* for each registration; but the Return in the hands of hon. Members showed that the amount might very well be reduced by one-half without interfering with the self-supporting character of the offices. It was not proposed to interfere in any way with the gentlemen who at present held the offices. Looking at the respect with which vested interests were treated in the House, his desire was to make satisfactory provision for the future in the interests of the public, and especially of those who had small transactions with the Registrars. With regard to the registration of deeds and titles, if what he proposed affected the subject at all, it would be in the direction of carrying out the object the Government had in view. It would certainly not retard any change that it might be desired to bring about, but would leave the course clear and open for it. The hon. Member (Mr. Dundas) had a Bill on the subject dealt with in the present measure; and it would, perhaps, be a convenient course to allow both Bills to be read a second time, and then to refer them to a Select Committee. The matter was one of an important public character, and it would be well if the Government would take up both Bills, and, as a result of the Committee, bring in a measure of their own on the subject.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Mr. WARTON opposed the Bill. The hon. Member for Stockton desired, under cover of an extensive measure, merely to work out one single clause, caring nothing about the question of the registration of deeds and titles.

Mr. DODDS said, he had made no statement to that effect.

Mr. WARTON complained that the hon. Member interrupted him merely for the sake of the pleasure he got out of an interruption. The hon. Member did not care whether there was to be a registration of titles or not. The Bill was objectionable on several grounds. In the first place, because it was a disfranchisement of the rights of the freeholder; in the next place, because local feeling was against it; and, further, because it would give patronage to a Member of the Government who would not be so well able to exercise it as the people in the localities concerned. His fourth objection to the Bill was that solicitors were nominated for the appointments. On all these grounds, he thought the obnoxious 31st clause ought not to be accepted. Therefore, he moved the rejection of the measure.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. DUNDAS said, that the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), in introducing the Bill before the House, had referred to another Bill which had been introduced; and as he (Mr. Dundas) was one of the Gentlemen who had introduced it, perhaps he might be allowed to say a few words upon the matter. By the existing law various duties were cast upon the Justices; and, considering the nature of those various duties, they had thought it their duty to prepare and introduce a Bill upon this question into the House. They accordingly did so, and that Bill had been introduced. The hon. Member for Stockton, he should have thought, under these circumstances, would not have considered it necessary to have introduced a Bill himself; but he had, however, thought fit to do so. When he (Mr. Dundas) came to look at it, he found that it contained 43 clauses, and that out of them 37 clauses were in form and substance identical with those of the Bill which had been introduced by the Justices. He considered it a very high testimonial to his proposal that the hon. Member should have thought right to have adopted those clauses. With regard to the office of Registrar, there was no doubt that the present condition of things was an anomaly, and could not be upheld even by those who objected to the disfranchisement of the freeholders. It had been suggested that some system of voting papers would reduce the expenses of the election; but he himself saw great difficulty in such a system. The hon. Member for Stockton had said that Mr. Lascelles had not been near his office; but he (Mr. Dundas) knew Mr. Lascelles was a magistrate for the West Riding, and always satisfied himself that the work in the office was being carried on in a satisfactory manner. Although the post of Registrar was to some extent a sinecure, yet it entailed very great responsibility, he being liable to make good any loss or damage that might arise. With regard to the administration of the office, it was suggested that the Lord Chancellor should appoint the Registrar, and that the expenses should be defrayed out of the Consolidated Fund. That was an intelligible proposition, and something might be said for it if the Government were intending to initiate a system of land registry throughout the country; but he was not aware that they proposed to do any such thing. He would also like to point out that, to a great extent, the success of a system of registration depended on the indexes. The Lord Chancellor was to regulate the forms and fees; but he ventured to doubt, as there was no Local Body to move the Lord Chancellor, whether a very efficient control would be exercised. If the power of making rules were vested in Local Bodies like the local County Boards, subject to the approval of the Lord Chancellor, even those Bodies would be able to put the Lord Chancellor in motion, and he thought efficiency would be secured. If the present Bill applied to all England, and not Yorkshire only, he did not suppose any objection would be raised to it. But the Bill was not general, and in Yorkshire there would be a strong local sentiment against the proposed centralization in the matter of patronage and control. For his part, he had no other desire than that the House should pass a good measure; and if this Bill, and also his own Bill, were referred to a Select Committee, he had no doubt that the right of the freeholders and the whole question of patronage would be thoroughly and justly dealt with to the satisfaction of all parties. He was of opinion that the point could not be satisfactorily decided and discussed on the second reading; and if the Bill were read a second time, he should then move the Amendment of which he had given Notice—namely, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. J. LOWTHER said he thought the House ought to have some explanation as to why two Bills should be brought forward on the same subject. His hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Mr. Dundas) had explained that the Bill of which he had the charge had been approved of by the Courts of Quarter Sessions of the three Ridings of Yorkshire; and in those circumstances the House was entitled to an explanation of why another Bill had been introduced on the subject. If the Bill of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds) differed in any material respect from the other he could understand it; but, as far as he saw it, the two Bills were practically, and for the most part verbally, identical, except on the question of patronage. What he most strongly objected to in the Bill of the hon. Member for Stockton was the establishment of a system of centralization. They were told that the patronage of the appointment of the Registrar must be handed over to a central authority in London, and he must refer to their previous experience in that respect. The House had last Session vested certain important patronage in the hands of the Executive Government, receiving a distinct pledge that under no conditions should that trust be abused, and that Party politics should be wholly eliminated in the exercise of that patronage. He should incur the risk of being called to Order if he were to say how great was the disappointment which was felt in that House as to the manner in which those pledges had been kept and the patronage administered. The hon. Member for Stockton not only vested the patronage in the Lord Chancellor, but he did not even consider the local authorities of Yorkshire competent to take charge of the building where the duties of the office were to be performed, and proposed to vest the custody of those buildings in the Crown. He thought he might undertake to say that the freeholders and other inhabitants of Yorkshire considered themselves personally able to take care of those buildings without the help of any central authority. The hon. Member not only vested the patronage of the Bill after the failure of the Bankruptcy Act in the hands of the Executive Government; but he also proposed to fetter the choice of that Representative of the Executive Government, and to provide that no person should be fitted to be appointed unless he was a member of the profession to which the hon. Member himself belonged. He should have thought they might have hoped that after recent experiences there would be one particular branch of that profession who would be already satiated with the Governmental patronage, and that election agents who had devoted their services to one particular Party in the State need not hope for another turn in the wheel of fortune. He thought they must be careful in future how they handed over to the Government of the day a series of such appointments, particularly under the conditions he had referred to. The hon. Member had referred to Mr. Marsden as approving of the Bill. Mr. Marsden was a gentleman deservedly held in high esteem, not only in his own immediate district, but throughout Yorkshire, and his opinion would always command respectful consideration. But he (Mr. J. Lowther) had the highest authority for saying that Mr. Marsden decidedly objected to the proposal to vest the patronage under the Bill in a central authority in London. The Bill was entirely uncalled for, and might be very judiciously laid aside in favour of the one of the hon. Member for Richmond, which had the greater weight of authority on its side. He had gathered from the hon. Member for Richmond's speech that some terms had been exacted from the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of the North Riding under which the two Bills were to be read a second time and referred to the same Select Committee. As a Member of the Court of Quarter Sessions of the North Riding, his belief was that that Court would entertain the strongest possible objection to the hon. Member for Stockton's Bill; and he had, moreover, every reason to believe that the same feeling pervaded the Courts of the other two Ridings; and the only reason why he would not put the House to the trouble of dividing against that Bill was that those who had the more legitimate measure in their charge might fear that that course would raise obstacles in their path, and that it might be more prudent to allow the hon. Member for Stockton's Bill to go before the Select Committee, in the confident belief that they would really hear no more of it. He thought any attempt to perpetuate the very anomalous system of constituency which now existed would be most undesirable. The expenses of the election under the present system must necessarily be very great, while the compilation of a Registry of freeholders was an almost impossible task. He hoped that the Bill which was supported by the Justices would find its way into law, and that the measure before the House would disappear.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, that, in the absence of the Home Secretary, it devolved upon him to offer a few remarks on that Bill. He had been Chairman of a Select Committee of that House which had, five years ago, sat on the subject of land transfer, and thoroughly examined the question. That Committee carefully investigated all the different systems of local and provincial Registries; and they came almost unanimously to the conclusion that the Yorkshire Registry, although, of course, as might be expected of a system which was established 180 years ago and had not been altered, it was capable of great improvement, yet it was one that few Yorkshiremen would like to see done away with, thus presenting a remarkable contrast to the case of the Middlesex Registry, which was unhesitatingly condemned by every witness. The Yorkshire system, however, was not uniform throughout the county, and the fees were too high. The mode of appointing the Registrar was about as bad as could be conceived; the cost of his election being very much like the cost of the election of a county Member of Parliament in olden times; but here the analogy ended, for it was necessary for the Registrar to recoup himself afterwards, in a way not open to Members of Parliament, for the enormous expense to which he had been put. The two Bills now before the House were practically the same as regarded the actual legal provisions; but they differed as to the persons in whom the power of appointing the Registrars should be vested. The hon. Member for Stockton proposed to vest the appointment in the Lord Chancellor. He did not know why such severe remarks had been made upon that proposal. The Lord Chancellor appointed all the Judges in the land, the County Court Judges, and numerous other officials—in fact, the whole judicial staff of the country. But on this he did not wish to say anything to prejudice the question—it was a matter that could be decided by the Select Committee. One of his hon. Friends said he was going to oppose this Bill on the ground that the registration of deeds was altogether objectionable, and that, instead of having registration of deeds, there ought to be registration of titles. In the abstract he was in favour of the principle; but before establishing a registration of titles they must have titles that could be registered. The question had been disposed of by a Committee, of which he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) had had the honour to be Chairman. No doubt, if they could get registration of title it would be far better, because if they registered the title they registered the result itself; while if they registered the deed they registered only the process by which the result was arrived at. When the subject was before the Committee, evidence was produced to show that registration had succeeded in Australia; but it was quite impossible to apply a system adopted in a new country to an old country. After all, we had some such system under Lord Cairns's Act. At the present time, only one person in 20,000 adopted that system of his own accord; but they could not compel the universal adoption of a system which was voluntarily adopted by so small a minority of purchasers. As things stood at present, he could not look upon a system of registration of title as practically possible; and, that being so, they had to deal with some form of registration which would reduce fraud to a minimum, and cheapen and facilitate the transfer of land. The proper course to adopt was to do all they could to improve the system. He would, therefore, on the part of the Government, consent to the second reading of the Bill, upon the understanding that not only this, but the rival Bill, should be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, it was his intention to support the Bill of the hon. Member for Richmond (Mr. Dundas), which was the original measure dealing with this subject. As a matter of policy, he consented to the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds). At the same time, he would remark it was fortunate for the hon. Member for Stockton that, in the printed proceedings of that House there was no law of copyright, for if there were the hon. Member would stand in a very uncomfortable position through the operation of that law. Anyone, on looking at the hon. Member's Bill, would see that he had taken a considerable portion of it from the Bill of the hon. Member for Richmond (Mr. Dundas). He had since so acted as to give his Bill precedence over the other measure.

MR. DODDS: My Bill, as now printed, was absolutely in the hands of the Lord Chancellor before the other Bill was printed, and has not been altered in any way whatever.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, that might be the case; but the hon. Member knew that the draft of the Bill of the hon. Member for Richmond had been in circulation before the three Courts of Quarter Sessions for months before either Bill could get printed, and, in fact, long before the Bill now before the House was thought of. The hon. Member had received advantages similar to those which he (Mr Stuart-Wortley) had described. The hon. Gentleman, fortunately for him, although he placed himself in the position of the two women who came before Solomon, did not expose himself to the same penalty. Although he was willing to have his Bill sent before a Select Committee to be pulled about, the Bill was not his own child, except as to the one material point of difference between the original Bill and the subsequent imitation of it by the hon. Member for Stockton, as to the question who should have the appointment of the Registrar. There was no doubt that in these Bills a very important question was raised of remedying the Law of Registration, and of getting rid of the decision of the Court of Equity, by which the usefulness of the Registration Acts had been much hindered; a decision which he was surprised had never been modified or removed. Everyone knew that if we were to have a registration of titles in this country, we should have to get rid of the power of settling real estate and creating jointures and portions. But public opinion was not yet prepared for that step. That was why it was not possible here to carry out such a proposal, although it was now in existence in the Colonies. There, however, he would point out, matters of land transfer were of a simpler character than was usually the case in this country. It could only be looked forward to—if, indeed, it were ever adopted—as a thing likely to arrive at a distant date. As to the appointment of the Registrar, the Bill of the hon. Member for Richmond proposed that it should be left to the three Courts of Quarter Sessions; and that Bill, he would remark, came before them with all the weight of the magistrates of the three Ridings. It might doubtless seem right and fitting, if they were prepared to disfranchise the £100 freeholders in the county, that there should be provided a proper substitute for that body. For his own part, he was inclined to doubt whether the appointment should be left with the Court of Quarter Sessions. He doubted whether the Court of Quarter Sessions was of itself the best possible body for the selection of such an officer to rest with; still less did he believe that what the hon. Member for Stockton called "an adequate county authority," would be satisfactory; for he supposed that the hon. Member for Stockton meant a County Board. If that were so, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) thought that the appointment would either be left to the Lord Chancellor, or go to a small Committee of the Bench of Magistrates, subject to the approval of the Lord Chancellor. He hoped the House would consent to the second reading of the Bill, on the understanding that the measure of the hon. Member for Richmond should be read a second time to-day, and that the two Bills should go before the same Select Committee.

MR. ELTON said, that by the Vendors and Purchasers Act of 1874 it was distinctly provided that in Yorkshire the devisee under an unregistered will should be preferred to the heir-at-law. Why was this to be now altered by a retrogressive policy so as to give the heir-at-law a prior title to such devisee?

Mr. DODDS replied, that this change was founded on the Report of 1850. If the second reading were taken, he would not press forward his measure until the other Bill had passed a similar stage, so that both Bills might go to a Select Committee together.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

DISUSED BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

(*Mr. J. R. Hollond, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Pell.*)

[BILL 46.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. J. R. HOLLOND, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to prevent buildings being erected on disused burial grounds. The Metropolitan Board of Works, he was informed, could not interfere until building operations actually commenced, and it was doubtful whether they could even then interfere successfully. The Bill prohibited building on a disused consecrated burial ground; and as to disused unconsecrated burial grounds it provided that the sanction of a Secretary of State should be necessary. He had been in communication with various Societies interested in this matter; and although he had encountered some difference of opinion with regard to details, he had found opinion unanimously in favour of the principle of his Bill. He hoped, considering the importance of reserving large open spaces in London and other large towns, the House would agree to the Bill being read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. J. R. Hollond.*)

Mr. ELTON said, he believed that this Bill was specially aimed at the case of a gentleman who intended to build on some of his land which, 40 or 50 years ago, was used as a burial ground. It might, no doubt, be well for the purposes of keeping open spaces that unused burial grounds should be secured. But it was not well that any Bill should be passed which did not contain a provision for the compensation, however small, of the legal interest which it was proposed to take away *sub silentio* if any of these disused burial grounds were private property.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he sympathized with the general purpose of the Bill, which was to secure open spaces in large towns. Some provision should, however, be taken to meet those cases in which faculties had been already granted for the erection of vicarage houses on disused burial grounds. He should not oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he should propose to amend it in some respects in Committee.

Mr. BRYCE pointed out that the objections raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Elton) would be much better dealt with in Committee. It was, however, extremely doubtful whether there were any such rights as the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to.

Viscount FOLKESTONE said, he did not think any hon. Member would object to the provisions of the Bill, because, on sanitary as well as upon other grounds, it ought to receive support. He would, however, suggest an alteration. In Section 5 of the Bill it was provided that one month's notice should be given of an application for a licence to erect any building on a disused burial ground. He thought it would be desirable that more than one month's notice should be given, in order that people might have a greater opportunity of knowing that such an application was made.

Mr. WARTON said, he hoped that some pledge would be given that a clause arranging for the compensation of persons whose rights were interfered with would be inserted in the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

COMMONS AND INCLOSURE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 63.]

(*Mr. W. H. James, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Cheetham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. W. H. JAMES, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to enlarge the scope of the Acts of 1866 and 1876 dealing with Metropolitan commons and commons throughout the country. The principle of the Bill was to apply a practical meaning to those Acts and to repeal the Statute of Merton. If the Bill was unopposed he was willing to refer it to a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. James.*)

Mr. ELTON moved that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months. He objected to the Statute of Merton being repealed by a Bill which it was proposed to read a second time after a speech of half a minute's duration, seeing that that Statute had been the subject of historical controversy ever since the Reign of Henry III. He thought the time now left was too short for the proper discussion of the important alterations in the law which the Bill contemplated. The Bill would take away the rights of lords of the manor to inclose without compensation.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Elton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Viscount FOLKESTONE complained that no sufficient reasons had been given for the changes proposed in the Bill. He should oppose it, as he had always consistently done when it had been on the Paper on several former occasions. The Bill involved very large interests and very large consequences.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

VIVISECTION PROHIBITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Reid, Bill to prohibit Vivisection, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Reid and Mr. Firth.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 134.]

BEER ADULTERATION BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Barne, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Barne, Mr. Hicks, and Mr. Storer.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 13th March, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Third Reading*—Mr. Speaker's Retirement*, and *passed.*

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—DEFEAT OF OSMAN DIGNA.—QUESTION.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has any information to communicate to the House respecting recent events near Suakin?

Earl GRANVILLE: In reply to the noble Marquess, I have to say that the following telegram has been received from General Graham by the Secretary of State for War, dated Osman Digna's Camp, March 13, 11.40 a.m.:—

"Camp taken after hard fighting since 8 o'clock.

"Killed, over 70, among whom Montresor, Almack, H. Stewart, Naval Brigade; Aitken (Major), Royal Highlanders; Ford, York and Lancaster.

"About 100 wounded."

INLAND REVENUE—SUCCESSION DUTY ON IRISH ESTATES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount MIDLETON said, he rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether in the case of Irish estates which had paid succession duty prior to the Land Act of 1881 on net rentals which have been since largely reduced by the Land Commission, the Treasury will be prepared to make a proportionate return of the duty already paid; and, whether succession duty will henceforth be payable by tenants in Ireland upon the value of their interests as fixed by the Land Court? That question involved a point of very considerable interest to the smaller landlords throughout Ireland. He would first take the case of a landlord whose property previous to the passing of the Land Act had been assessed for the purposes of succession duty at a net rental of, say, £400 a-year. Supposing him to be a man in middle life, that net rental would be valued as an annuity of 15 years, and the duty would be assessed on a capital sum of

£6,000. Since the passing of the Land Act the owner found himself in this position—taking the deductions made by the Sub-Commissioners at an average of 25 per cent—and that was a much lower figure than was frequently obtained on properties on that amount—he would find himself, having paid succession duty on a capital sum of £6,000, entitled only to an income of £300 a-year, representing, under similar circumstances, a capital sum of £4,500. In that case that difference in value had been substracted from him and from his income by an Act of the Legislature. He could not have anticipated it; in all probability he had no share in fixing the rental, having succeeded to the property on which the duty was assessed. Had he taken the best professional advice at his disposal he would probably have been informed that the rental was a fair one as things went. The consequence was that he was a sufferer from no act of his own, but from the Legislature having directly intervened in the management of his affairs. He (Viscount Midleton) wished to know whether, in the circumstances, and bearing in mind that the rent was valued for 15 years, the Treasury would be prepared to grant a drawback equivalent to the difference which had been made in his rental; or, secondly, supposing the answer to be that the Treasury never gave up anything that it had once annexed—which he believed to be a fair and correct statement of its usual practice—what, then, would be the course which the Succession Duty Office would be likely to adopt in case of similar circumstances occurring, except that all the instalments had not been paid at the passing of the Land Act? He had a case before him at the present moment which had been sent to him by a person in Ireland with whom he was wholly unacquainted, and which stated the circumstances of a property with which the writer was connected. In that case the actual deductions made from a property in Donegal and Antrim had been about 23 per cent. The instalments which had been paid had been so paid upon the footing that the rental remained untouched; and now the landlord asked the pertinent question whether it was necessary for him to continue paying upon income which he no longer possessed, or whether any deduction would be made in the instalments subsequently due, or the deductions which had been made from the income by the act of the Land Commission. It seemed to him (Viscount Midleton) that a fair case had been made out for a drawback being allowed. No option remained to the owner. He must submit to the rent which was now imposed upon him by law, and for 15 years he knew that he could ask for no increase of rent. The other question had reference to the tenants, and not to the owners. He would give a specimen case which came within his own knowledge. A farm was taken about two and a-half years before the passing of the Land Act by a stranger at an agreed and not at a competition rent. The moment the Land Act passed he applied for a substantial reduction. That was refused, and he filed an originating notice. When the case came on for hearing the Sub-Commissioners decided that the rent was a fair rent. When the tenant applied further to have the value of his interest in the land fixed, although it was not pretended that he had done anything to have improved the land beyond taking the ordinary crop out of it and paying a year's rent, the value of his interest in the land was assessed by the Sub-Commissioners at six years' purchase of the net rental. Now, he (Viscount Midleton) wanted to know, supposing succession took place, would succession duty attach to the tenant's interest as so defined and settled by the Sub-Commissioners? He had no idea what answer he would receive. He hoped it would not be that the Courts were open; that he knew already. He ventured to say that in connection with the Land Act of Ireland they had already had far too much law. Whatever benefits any class of the community had received from the passing of the Act—and he would not discuss that question at present—there was one class which had been most unmistakably favoured, and that was the local attorneys throughout the length and breadth of the country. There was scarcely a single case in which the landlord was taken into Court which he could expect to get out of without an expenditure of £5; and, if the case went up for appeal, the sum was often doubled. He knew of one case involving a question of 50*s.* in a rent of £70 or £80 a-year, which cost the landlord and tenant upwards of £50 to get settled; and when the decision was finally announced it settled no principle, but only the particular case out of which it arose. Therefore, he hoped the Government might be able to give some information for the benefit of those concerned with respect to the question whether, when succession duty was demanded, those concerned were to be compelled to engage in an extensive lawsuit on a question not of detail but of principle? The Government had actually extracted either the whole or a portion of a succession duty, which was fair on the assumption that the larger sum was at the disposal of the life tenant; and it seemed to him only fair that some consideration in the form of a Return of what had actually been paid should be made, and that the Government should cease in the future to demand a payment which could no longer be said equitably to attach to the estate upon which it was levied.

LORD THURLOW, in reply, said, the Treasury were advised that it would not be competent for them in strict law to make a Return of Duty in the circumstances mentioned, for the reason that succession duty was payable according to the annual value of the property at the time when the interest of the successor accrued. But acting under their general powers, and in view of the special condition of Irish affairs, they had issued an authority to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to reconsider any outstanding cases the succession to which opened in or after the year 1879, and with regard to which the valuations then fixed had been reduced by the circumstances of the country. As regarded the future payment of succession duty by tenants in respect of their interests, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue would in due course of law be bound to assess the duty upon the annual value shown to exist at the time when the duty became assessable, which in the circumstances might possibly vary from that fixed by the Land Court, to whose decision, however, due regard would be paid. The noble Viscount would, therefore, see that in both the cases to which he had referred the Treasury would be prepared to take them into consideration.

LAW AND JUSTICE—JURISDICTION OF ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH COURTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY, in rising to call attention to the conflict of jurisdiction which had arisen between the English and Scottish Courts of Justice, especially with regard to the Orr Ewing case; and to ask the Lord Chancellor, Whether the Government will introduce a Bill into Parliament with the view of reconciling and determining the law of both countries? said, he hoped it would not be considered impertinent on his part to call attention to this matter in the presence of those who were better informed than he was; but the subject had attracted so much attention on both sides of the Tweed that he felt it his duty to call their Lordships' attention to it. He would, however, try to avoid details. His object was to show that a conflict of jurisdiction on several points had arisen between the English and the Scottish Courts, that the question was of very great importance, and that a necessity existed for immediate legislation. The matter was one of special importance to those who, like himself, had property in both England and Scotland. The case which had excited this interest, or rather which had brought matters to a head—because the interest had been growing for many years—was a case known as the Orr Ewing case. He did not intend to weary their Lordships by going into the long history of the case, but he would endeavour to put the facts shortly before the House. A domiciled Scotchman, Mr. Orr Ewing, died in May, 1878, leaving a large amount of property, 17-18ths of which were in Scotland and 1-18th in England. There were six trustees appointed to administer the property. Four of the trustees resident in Scotland took the necessary steps to comply with the law, and obtained a confirmatory order from the Commissary Court of Dumbarton authorizing them to bring the English asset to Scotland and to administer the estate. According to the law that order had to come to the Probate Court in England to be sealed for the purpose of bringing in the English asset. Two years after the death of Mr. Orr Ewing a question was raised by a minor, who was interested for a small amount, and his next friend or guardian, claiming that the whole estate should be administered under the authority of the Court of Chancery in England. A summons was brought in this Court and was granted. Appeals had been heard upon that summons; the case had gone up to the House of Lords, and it had been decided that this large estate should be brought to the Court of Chancery to be administered. In the meantime the other trustees resident in Scotland brought forward a case in Scotland claiming authority to administer the trust estate in Scotland, and the highest Court of that country had given a decision that the estate must be administered in Scotland. He did not wish to enter into all the points that had been raised; but if their Lordships wished to know all the facts connected with this conflict of authority, he would refer them to a very interesting book that had been edited and published by Sheriff Spens, Sheriff-Substitute of Glasgow, which set out all the facts of the case. In that book would be found very interesting arguments by the Judges of this country as to whether Scotland was a foreign country. It appeared to him, however, that the differences that had arisen were questions of law. If both sides were right in their contention, something ought to be done directly by legislation to decide the difficulty. The difference that had arisen existed chiefly upon the following points:—(1) Did the fact of probate in the English Court (even of a small portion of the estate) necessitate the administration, if claimed, of all the property in England and under English law? (2) Did the claim of any beneficiary to have the estate administered in the Court of Chancery, and upon that Court giving an order accordingly, override the customary procedure in Scotland and in Scottish Courts, and compel the trustees in Scotland to come to England and, under English Courts, to fulfil their duties? To these questions the English Judges said "Yes," and the Scotch Judges "No;" and the highest legal authority in each country—namely, the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President of the Court of Session — had taken diametrically different views. The Lord Chancellor, on the 30th November, in the course of a judgment, said—

> "The argument from the official character of the appellants, by reason of the confirmation of the will by a Scottish Court, may be summarily dismissed. The effect in that respect of confirmation in Scotland (or of probate in England) is and must be the same, whatever may be the domicile of the testator. It is merely to complete the title of the executors to represent their testator within the local jurisdiction *in mobilibus*, and the necessity for this is independent of domicile. Those special provisions of the statute in which a Scotch domicile is mentioned affect the inventory only, and not the character of the title obtained by confirmation. The Scottish confirmation requires to be, and in the present case it was, sealed by the English Court of Probate; which sealing, under the statute, has the same operation as if probate had been granted by the English Court. The appellants, therefore, now represent their testator *in mobilibus* within both jurisdictions, and under the will they are trustees not of part only of the estate but of the whole. The Court which grants confirmation of probate is not a Court of Administration, though (when there are no executors nominated by the will) it may appoint administrators; nor are the executors (in any sense exclusive of the jurisdiction of any other forum, in a case in which it might otherwise attach) officers of that Court."

That was the opinion of the highest authority in this country. On the other hand, the Lord President of the Court of Session, on the 29th of February, 1883, laid down the law as follows:—

> "The defenders having in the Commissary Court of Dumbartonshire given up on oath, an inventory of the whole of the deceased's personal estate, including the funds and effects situated in England as well as those situated in Scotland, and having exhibited to the Commissary the trust-disposition and settlement of the deceased, the Commissary pronounced his deliverance confirming the nomination of the defenders as executors, and giving them 'full power to uplift, receive, administer, and dispose of the said personal estate and effects' (*i.e.*, the estate and effects contained in the inventory, both Scottish and English), "to grant discharges thereof, if needful, to pursue therefore and generally every other thing concerning the same to do that to the office of an executor-nominate is known to belong.' Now this is the sole grant of right to administer the estate of the deceased which the defenders have obtained. They require no other. No doubt, to give it the effect of an active title to recover from English debtors or to uplift English funds the seal of the Probate Court of England is directed by the statute to be impressed upon it. But the official of the Probate Court cannot refuse to impress the seal. He has no discretion in the matter. His act is not judicial, but a mere statutory formality. The seal is impressed not because the Probate Court or its official has seen the nomination of the executors or the inventory of the estate, or the oath of the executors confirmed, not because the executors have taken any oath in the Probate Court or undertaken any duties in that Court, or found there any security for their just and true administration, but simply and solely because the officer of the Probate Court has had presented to him

what bears to be a confirmation sealed with the seal of the Commissary of Dumbartonshire, together with a certified copy of the interlocutor of the Commissary, pronounced in terms of the statute. He, as ordained by the statute, affixes the seal which gives the confirmation force and effect in England solely because the Commissary of Dumbartonshire has given the executors the power and right to ingather that portion of the estate which is situated in England. And after the seal is impressed the statute requires that the confirmation shall be 'returned to the person producing the same,' so that neither the confirmation nor the sealing of it is required to be made matter of record in the Court of Probate. To hold that the Scotch confirmation when sealed, and because it is sealed by the officer of the Probate Court, becomes an English grant of probate in a question of jurisdiction, seems to be much the same thing as it would be to hold that a judgment of an English Court registered in Scotland and put to execution there under the Judgments Extension Act, becomes, in a question of jurisdiction, a judgment of a Scotch Court."

He would ask their Lordships to consider what the effect of this was. There were judgments given by the two highest authorities in England and Scotland diametrically opposed to each other in their terms—distinctly and entirely contradictory; and the state of the case was this, that they had the Law Courts of England and Scotland in direct conflict. He would appeal to their Lordships whether this was a matter which should be allowed to continue on its present footing, and whether this grievance regarding both countries should not be removed? Scotchmen certainly would not be inclined to allow that their jurisdiction was to be overridden by the Court of Chancery in England. They would hardly be willing to allow the suppression of the jurisdiction of their own Court, and there was a very natural reason for their not doing so. They had only to turn to the Act of Union to see that most strongly in that Act of Union it was laid down that the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts would continue. The 19th Article of the Act of Union said—

"No causes in Scotland shall be cognoscible by the Courts of Chancery, Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, or any other Court in Westminster Hall; and the said Courts, or any other of a like nature, after the Union shall have the power to cognosce, review, or alter the Acts or sentences of adjudicature within Scotland, or stop the execution of the same."

In the face of this fact, and with the knowledge that there was this ancient custom and ancient law in Scotland as to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts, most Scotchmen would feel that there was a growing tendency in England to make some sort of onslaught upon a Scottish jurisdiction. The feeling might be wrong; but there could be no doubt that the feeling did exist very strongly, and that it was a growing feeling. Because this Orr Ewing case was not the first case of the kind that had attracted the attention of the public. It was very well known that the case of the late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell called forth a great deal of comment. In that case, one of the trustees of the estate of the late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, by his action, brought the whole of the deceased's estate to be administered in the Court of Chancery, when the property in England really consisted of a house in London—a very small asset compared with the large estate he had in Scotland. There was another point to which he wished to call their Lordships' attention. If this were really good law, that any trustee, if he wished, could call upon the other trustees to bring the property in Scotland to be administered in the Court of Chancery, although there might be only a small amount of property in England, would it not be dangerous to legatees in the future, and especially was it a danger which loomed largely in the future to those who, like himself, owned properties in both England and Scotland? The property might be left in trust to six executors, all of them in Scotland; one of them might change his residence and go to England; yet, simply by the whim of that executor, the whole property might be brought to England to be administred, for that really was the bearing of the law brought to its logical conclusion. Now, what he thought Scotchmen would insist upon was this—that a domiciled Scotchman ought to have a right to insist upon his property in Scotland being administered entirely according to the Scottish law and custom, and in that country, after his decease. He did not wish to go into any other grievances which had arisen, but one which was very largely felt in Scotland was the grievance in connection with the service of writs. Up till the year 1875, when the Judicature Act was passed, there was no power of service upon Scotchmen under a process in the English Court. That Act, however, gave the power, and since then the Rules of Court had put in the discretion of the English Judge the issuing of these writs. This was felt in Scotland to be a very great hardship, because ever since Scotland was a nation, up till 1875, no such thing was known. There was a case which he saw reported in *The Times* this morning—the case of a merchant in Aberdeen who was summoned by a foreigner, without any residence in this country, to come to London to defend himself in the action. That case being *sub judice*, he did not wish to enter on it at the present moment; but he wished merely to say that this question of the service of writs was felt to be a very great grievance. What was felt in Scotland was this—these questions were so grave that they would simply be argued about and continually discussed, and very great grievance and hardship created, unless some settlement were carried out by the definition of the law. It had often been said that Solomon's judgment was a very severe one when he ordered the baby to be cut in two parts and divided between the two claimants. The result here was worse than in Solomon's judgment, because in this case it appeared that the property would be given away entirely to a third party, and that third party the lawyers. The public, he believed, thought that that Learned Profession already had enough; and, unless these estates were to be eaten up in litigation, some measure should be brought in to settle the matter. He, therefore, appealed to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack whether he would not bring in a Bill to settle these vexed questions, and to bring to an end this conflict of jurisdiction? That would certainly be a way out of the difficulty, and remove the scandal and heartburning which at present existed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I can only assure my noble Friend that if there is, or is likely to be, a conflict of jurisdiction between the English and the Scottish Courts, there is no one in your Lordships' House or elsewhere who would regret it more than I should do. My own feeling has always been one of high respect for the Scottish Courts, for the Scottish law, and for the Scottish people; and I have no less respect for the Courts, and the law, and the people of this country; and I should have thought that, as time went on, there would be a general sense of the desirableness of co-operation, and not conflict, between the Courts of both countries, each recognizing the necessity of the jurisdiction which the other exercises in its own country, and being not unwilling to give assistance to the other upon all proper occasions. The tendency of modern legislation has been in the same direction; the Mercantile Law of both countries has been assimilated, and facilities have been given for the execution of the judgments of the Courts of each country in the other, and in many other ways, consistent with the preservation of the peculiar law and jurisdiction of Scotland by the Act of Union, the administration of justice has been drawn together for the public advantage in both countries, as far as might be. The final Court of Appeal, also, from both countries, is your Lordships' House, and this has exercised a clear, and, on the whole, I think it will be admitted by Scotchmen as well as Englishmen, a beneficial influence towards diminishing unnecessary conflict, at all events, between the laws of both countries and their administration. And I own, as far as I am acquainted with the views of English Judges and English lawyers both in and out of this House, I think they share the views which I have expressed, and that there is no tendency whatever towards encroachment on the Scottish jurisdiction, and no jealousy whatever of that jurisdiction. Whatever may be legal within our own jurisdiction in matters in which Scotchmen resident in England may be interested, we should undoubtedly not complain if exactly the same thing were done in Scotland in matters in which Englishmen resident there were interested—of course, assuming that the Scottish law and the practice in Scottish Courts might enable the same thing to be done. As far as I am aware, I am not in a position to say that any conflict of jurisdiction has at present arisen. The noble Lord seems to have authentic information upon points on which I cannot for the present profess to have information. I know what has happened in this House, and I will state presently what has taken place here with regard to the jurisdiction of the English Courts. Whether the decisions in Scotland are in conflict with what has taken place here I cannot possibly say, and that for two reasons—

first of all, because it may be that the decisions of the Scottish Courts out of which this conflict is supposed to have arisen, or to be in danger of arising, may be brought by way of appeal to your Lordships' House, and I should be forgetting my duty if I said a word which could interfere with the proper judicial consideration of those matters, if brought here by way of appeal. I have at present no real authentic information as to what has happened in Scotland. If the case is brought here by appeal, that information will necessarily be furnished to those who may have to decide the appeal; and I feel perfectly confident that they will recognize it as their duty to decide any such question according to the law of Scotland as they find the law of Scotland to be, even if the result should be to show a conflict of jurisdiction, making some legislation necessary; but until that takes place, I cannot admit that there is any such conflict of jurisdiction, or any necessity for legislation. Another thing may happen, as to which I have at present no information whatever. When this House had the case which the noble Lord described as the "Orr Ewing" case before it, there was only one litigation; there was a suit in the High Court of Justice in England, and no suit in Scotland. The Scottish Courts had not then exercised any jurisdiction over the matter at all. Nothing done in England has interfered in the slightest degree with anything done by the Courts in Scotland. No conflict did or could arise out of those proceedings, simply because there were no proceedings elsewhere which could come into conflict with them. But since the decision of your Lordships' House proceedings have been taken in Scotland, and, as I understand, the Court in Scotland has appointed over the trust-estate in question what is called in Scotland a Judicial Factor, or in England a Receiver. I suppose that is equivalent to the Scottish Court taking upon itself the administration of this trust-estate. Well, the proper way, I should conceive, under these circumstances to ascertain whether there is to be any embarrassment through the concurrent litigation in the two Courts, would be for an application to be made, if the Scottish Court thinks it ought to be made, to the Court in England for a stay of proceedings. Whether that application will be made, or what the result of it may be if made, I do not know. If there be no such application, or if there be such an application, until it is ascertained that the English Court does not see its way to stay the proceedings in this country, and to leave the administration of the trust to be entirely done in Scotland, I do not see how there can be any conflict of jurisdiction at all. This English Orr Ewing case, which appears to me to have been misunderstood, as far as I can make out, was of a very simple description. It did not turn upon any technicality at all. It was the case of a Scotch gentleman leaving an extremely large personal estate, worth about £500,000. By his will he divided the bulk of that estate between six nephews and nieces. One of these, who would be entitled to about £80,000, lived with his guardian in England. Of the trustees, who, I think, were six in number, two were ordinarily resident in England, and carrying on business in this country. The third was accustomed to spend half of every year in England, and the other three ordinarily resided in Scotland. The guardian of the child in England entitled to this large sum of about £80,000 thought the trust should be administered—not that all the estate should be brought from Scotland to England—under the direction of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, so that the amount of the child's interest might be ascertained and the proper accounts taken, and information obtained as to the way the estate was being administered. For that purpose a suit was instituted in the English Court, and the writ was regularly served upon those three of the trustees who were actually in England by the next friend of the child, who was also resident in this country. Notice of the action was also served, under orders of the Court, upon the three trustees who were in Scotland. If those trustees had objected because they lived in Scotland, or because the case was one in which they ought not to be sued in England, or if, for any other cause, they had protested against the service of the writ, and could show sufficient grounds for their objection, they would have been at liberty to ask the Court in England that the order for service upon them should be discharged. They did no such thing. Of course I do not say, that if they had done so, they ought to, or would, have succeeded. The probability is, that they acted under sound and good advice. They appeared, and submitted to the English jurisdiction exactly in the same way as if they had been personally in England, and regularly served in England. Not only so, but they raised the question whether it was for the benefit of the infant plaintiff that the suit should be prosecuted. The Scottish trustees asked the Court to make that inquiry. The English Court did make that inquiry, and found that it was for the benefit of the child that the suit should go on in England, and ordered that it should be so; and from that order the trustees did not appeal. All this time there was no other suit or proceeding. It was a trust, one and undivided, of the whole property. It is quite true that much the greater part of the property was invested in Scotland. I think about £25,000 only was, at the time of the testator's death, invested in England. But it was impossible to separate that part of the trust from the rest, and in such cases the Court of Chancery has always exercised jurisdiction, and in this case it did exercise jurisdiction, although the property was in Scotland; and, in doing so, it was only what it might have done if, in place of Scotland, it had been France, Spain, the United States of America, or any other country in the world. That is the state of the case. The House of Lords and the Court below said that if there had been any competing suit, upon a proper application, proceedings might, probably, have been stayed in England, and those in Scotland allowed to go on. But there was no such suit, and therefore, of course, no such application. The argument really resolved itself into this—that because the testator had been a Scotchman, and because the greater part of the money was in Scotland, therefore the trustees were to be under no judicial control at all. It was even said that the circumstances did not admit of any similar suit being instituted in Scotland. But the Scottish Court has now exercised jurisdiction, and I should think, with a little good sense on both sides, the parties may easily find out in which country the suit would best proceed, and take proper means for having that question tried. As to the noble Lord's remarks about the rights of the Scottish Judicature under the Act of Union, I am wholly unable to understand how those rights can, by anyone, be supposed to have been invaded. The Act of Union prevents any interference of the English Courts with the Scottish Courts. But this was no interference with any Scottish Court. It was simply the exercise of English equitable jurisdiction in England against three defendants resident in England and three others who submitted to English jurisdiction. With regard to the other complaint made by my noble Friend about the service of English writs in Scotland, all I can say is, that, when the procedure of the English Courts was revised last year, the greatest possible care was taken to meet every reasonable objection which had been made to that part of it which relates to the service of English processes abroad, and with regard to Scotland especially some exceptional conditions were introduced. Every case was excluded which it was possible to exclude, for the purpose of avoiding offence to the susceptibilities of the Scottish nation or hardship to Scottish litigants. Until this recent excitement about what has passed in England in the Orr Ewing case, I thought the manner in which the Rules on that subject were now framed was not unsatisfactory to the best judges of the matter even in Scotland. I think we should be making a step backwards towards barbarism, and not towards higher civilization, if all power to serve process, or notice of process, out of England were stopped; and the same would be equally true if no party to a Scottish suit could be served out of Scotland. It would be impossible to conceive anything more likely to multiply unnecessary litigation and expense, and to throw impediments in the way of the proper and reasonable course of the administration of justice on both sides of the Border, than to say that because one man happened to be in Scotland and another in England, both being interested in the same matter, it should be impossible to make them parties to one suit. I care not in which country it happens. So far as we are concerned, we desire that what is proper and reasonable should be done in both countries. If a real and ultimate conflict of jurisdiction were found to exist, which tended to disturb the harmony of the judicial or other relations between England and Scotland, it would then be well deserving the consideration of the Government whether that conflict could not be got rid of by some reasonable legislative act; but until it is clearly shown what, if any, conflict of jurisdiction has occurred in the present case, I do not perceive the necessity for introducing a Bill.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, that in Scotland there had certainly been something approaching to a strong national feeling that there had been an invasion of the Act of Union by the action of the English Courts. Now, however, he understood from the noble and learned Lord that no conflict of jurisdiction had taken place. That very morning the newspapers had contained the information that a very strong step had been taken by the Court of Session in the case under consideration by the appointment of a Judicial Factor. The Judicial Factor would keep possession; and unless they heard that that action of the Scottish Court was checkmated by any ultimate decision of this House as a Court of Appeal, the difficulty about which complaints had arisen would probably end. He hoped that the statement of the noble and learned Lord would calm down the excitement which was undoubtedly prevalent in Scotland.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 13*th March*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Huntingdon Borough, *v.* Viscount Hinchingbrook, now Earl of Sandwich, called up to the House of Peers.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4); CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES; CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS; CIVIL SERVICE EXCESSES.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*— Tooting, Balham, and Brixton Railway *.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Hyde Park Corner Improvements* [136].

Committee—Report—National Debt* [128].

Considered as amended—Valuation (Metropolis) Amendment * [108].

QUESTIONS.

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LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH, TROWBRIDGE—BURGESS v. CLARKE AND COLLINS.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Burgess v. Clarke and Collins, heard before Mr. Justice Cave at Devizes on the 12th of January last (reported in the "Local Government Chronicle" of February 9th), when a penalty of £50 was recovered by a common informer from the clerk to the Local Board of Health at Trowbridge, under section 193 of "The Public Health Act, 1875," for having let a room in his office to the board; and, whether, considering that in a great number of instances the clerks have been accustomed to let to their board a room in their office for a board room, and it would seem under this section that for so doing they are not only liable to a penalty of £50, but are declared incapable of afterwards holding or continuing in any office or employment under the Act, he will consider the advisability of bringing in an amending Act which will free clerks and other officers of boards from their past and present liabilities?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, our attention has been called to the case of "Burgess *v.* Clarke and Collins." The defendant seemed to have acted in entire good faith, and the case appears to be one of considerable hardship. We are informed that there is to be an appeal against the decision, and if it should appear that under these circumstances the clerk to a local board is liable to a penalty, we should certainly be prepared to propose an amendment of the law.

In reply to a further Question from Sir JOHN KENNAWAY,

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: If the hon. Member likes to bring in a Bill dealing with the subject, the Government will consider it.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL COMMUNICATION WITH TORY ISLAND.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the fact that there is no Post Office on Tory Island; whether he is aware that letters for the island are frequently delayed a fortnight, and even a month, on the mainland, and that letters reach the island from time to time without envelopes, wet, and occasionally torn to pieces; if the number of letters for this place average a total of seventy a week; whether representations upon this subject have been made to the Right honourable Gentleman by the Reverend J. J. O'Donnell; whether a contract was entered into, a few months ago, between the Post Office authorities and a resident on the island under which the latter agreed to convey the letters to and from the island for six shillings a week; whether this contract has been cancelled; if so, on what grounds; and, whether he can see his way to establish a more regular postal communication with the island in question?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, the facts about the postal arrangements on Tory Island are, I fear, as the hon. Member describes. No contract, such as he mentions, for the conveyance of letters from the mainland has been entered into, and I can only say that if he knows any suitable person who will convey them upon the terms described, I shall be glad to arrange with him.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DR. RAWSON, MEDICAL OFFICER OF CARSON UNION.

Mr. WOODALL (for Mr. Thorold Rogers) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can inform the House why Mr. E. A. Rawson, who was compelled to resign the situation of Medical Officer to Carlow Union in January last, owing to paralysis, due to a blow from a stone received on his head during the last general election, has been refused by the Guardians of the Union a superannuation allowance after twelve years' service?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am unable to give the hon. Member all the information which he desires. A resolution was proposed at a recent meeting of the Board of Guardians to grant a superannuation allowance to Dr. Rawson, but the resolution was lost on a division. The majority did not, I believe, assign any reason for their action. The matter was within the discretion of the Board of Guardians.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—FORCIBLE RE-ENTRY AFTER EVICTION—CASE OF T. OLWILL.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the prosecution, in February last, of Thomas Olwill, for alleged forcible entry on a farm from which he had been evicted, in the parish of Lavey and county of Cavan; whether Sub-Inspector Tilly said—

> "The defendant would not be brought into Court at all had the bailiff informed me of the true state of facts;"

and, whether the defendant is entitled to compensation for the expense and trouble he has suffered?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has been drawn to this case. The District Inspector did make the statement mentioned. If any wrong has been committed it has not been by the police, who took action on the sworn deposition of the bailiff, and Olwill has his remedy at law.

SHIPWRECKS AND DISASTERS AT SEA —STATISTICS.

Mr. WHITLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will print and circulate among the Members of this House, the statement of all ships lost during the year 1883, together with the amount of insurance effected in shipping freight and cargo respectively, as furnished to him by the Committee of Lloyd's?

Mr. J. HOLMS: Sir, the statement in question is, I assume, a Return of ships reported to Lloyd's as lost during the year 1883, with various particulars as to insurance and other matters. It is given by Lloyd's Committee to the Board to be used by them as confidential, and cannot be published without the consent of Lloyd's Committee. It is as yet far from complete, and from the cursory examination the Board of Trade have been able to give to the parts of it submitted to them it will need much examination and correspondence before it is in a complete state.

POOR LAW—TRANSFER OF PAUPERS TO IRELAND—CASE OF WILLIAM DAVIS.

Mr. HEALY asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been called to the hearing of the appeal against the removal of William Davis and family from Plymouth to Londonderry, heard at Plymouth before the Recorder, when it was proposed to give evidence by three independent witnesses that the books of the Plymouth Board had been tampered with since the commencement of the proceedings; and, if the Local Government Board intend to hold an inquiry into the matter?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that the advisability of ordering a Local Government Board Inquiry was now under consideration.

CENSUS RETURNS OF URBAN DISTRICTS.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will direct, in future Census Returns, for the enumeration of all urban places which are entitled to be deemed towns, having a population of 2,000 inhabitants and upwards, not included within the limits of any Parliamentary borough, and not being corporate towns regulated by the Municipal Corporation Act?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, Questions as to the Census Returns of 1891 cannot practically be dealt with until the Bill, which will be brought forward in 1890, is before the House. In the meantime, the Local Government Board will not be in a position to give such directions as are suggested. It may be observed that in the Census Returns of 1881 the population of every urban and rural sanitary district is separately shown. It was not deemed desirable to attempt to enumerate separately as towns places without known and defined boundaries which were not urban sanitary districts, although they comprised a population of 2,000 inhabitants and upwards.

FRANCHISE (IRELAND) — ELECTORAL STATISTICS.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the additional Estimate of £500 for Electoral Statistics in Ireland, ordered by the House of Lords, on a Division which was carried against Her Majesty's Government by a majority of five Peers, Whether this House will have any opportunity of expressing an opinion upon this Estimate before the expenditure has been ordered?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, as my hon. Friend states, this Return was ordered by the House of Lords against the judgment of Her Majesty's Government; and we were in some difficulty, inasmuch as the ordinary Estimate of the Valuation Office did not contain provision for the expense of preparing the Return. The Treasury, after consultation with the Irish Government, thought an additional Estimate should be presented; and the work of the Return, which cannot be commenced until next month, will be proceeded with unless this House should indicate a resolution to refuse to vote the money.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — SUB-POST OFFICE AT GUBAVEENY.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether, some months ago, he ordered a Sub Post Office to be established at Gubaveeny, about half-way between Blacklion and Doura; and, whether the Sub Post Office has yet been opened; and, if not, will it soon be opened?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that there had been some difficulty in the finding of a suitable person to take charge of this office; but the arrangement had not been lost sight of.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—BATTLE OF EL TEB—LOSSES OF THE SOUDANESE.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Has he ascertained how many Soudanese troops were killed at El Teb, and how many were wounded on the same occasion; and, will he state what are the estimated figures?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the only information I have with reference to this subject is contained in a telegram from General Graham, which has already been published, in which he reports that the losses of the rebels have been very heavy, nearly 900 bodies having been buried, irrespective of those killed in the Cavalry operations.

Mr. GIBSON: That was the telegram received the morning after the engagement.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes.

Mr. GIBSON: But has the Government never asked since whether it was true, as stated in the newspapers, that our troops buried 2,500 dead bodies of the Soudanese troops, and that nearly 6,000 were wounded?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: We are expecting to receive almost immediately from General Graham full despatches, which will, no doubt, contain the details asked for by the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. GIBSON. I will ask this Question again on Monday.

INLAND REVENUE—PROPOSED LICENCE FOR RAILWAY BOOKSTALLS.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If, before introducing the Budget, he will consider the advisability of raising revenue by allowing newsvendors, on payment of an annual licence, to sell literature at Railway Stations; could he state approximately what amount would be realised to the Exchequer by levying a tax of one pound per annum on each Railway bookstall in the Kingdom; and, whether there would be any difficulty or expense in collection?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In reply to the hon. Member I may say that it is the special function of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider proposals for new taxes as well as for the increase or diminution of existing taxes. I receive several hundred proposals of this kind in the course of the year, and I shall be happy to consider that of the hon. Member; but I do not quite understand its purport. Does he propose that the Revenue officers of Her Majesty's Government should give licences for bookstalls at railway stations whether the Companies to whom the stations belong permit or not the bookstalls to be placed there, or is the tax only to be paid for bookstalls allowed by the Companies? For my own part, I should greatly doubt whether Parliament has the power of overriding the right of a Railway Company to give or refuse permission to any person to keep a bookstall at a station, and I certainly am not prepared to make such a proposal to Parliament. I believe that there are about 6,500 passenger stations in the United Kingdom, and I should conjecture that there may be bookstalls at from a third to a half of these. If so, the Revenue derivable from the last suggestion by the hon. Member might produce from £2,000 to £3,000. There would be no difficulty in collecting it.

Mr. HEALY inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that it had been decided in a recent case that no local taxes were payable by such stalls, and whether they were in the habit of competing with poor tradesmen by selling other articles besides books?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): No, Sir, I was not aware of it; but the remedy would be to make them rateable by law. It is as easy to make them rateable as to make them taxable.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—IRISH-SPEAKING TENANTS—CASE OF MARY STAUNTON.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state on what point the Irish-speaking tenant Mary Staunton attempted to deceive Mr. M'Devitt's Sub-Commission; is there anything in the Rules of Court or instructions to Sub-Commissioners, authorising the withholding the benefits of the Land Act from tenants who prefer to give their evidence in their native language; if not, does the Head Commission approve the striking out of Widow Staunton's application to have a fair rent fixed, because, in the opinion of the legal Sub-Commissioner, she might have testified in English; and, has any advice been tendered to Mr. M'Devitt for his future guidance with regard to witnesses who prefer to speak in Irish?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received a communication on this case from the Land Commissioners to the following effect:—

> "The Land Commissioners cannot ask Assistant Commissioner M'Devitt to explain the reasons of his decision in this case. If the tenant felt herself agrieved, her proper course was to apply for a rehearing of her case under the 44th section of the Act."

I conclude that the Land Commissioners think it would be a proceeding of the same nature as a Superior Court of Appeal asking for the reason of a decision from an Inferior Court. There is no rule of Court or special instruction to Assistant Commissioners with respect to the matter mentioned in the second paragraph—

> "The practice is—(I am now reading the letter of the Land Commissioners)—as has been already stated, that is to say, that an interpreter is always employed when required. The Land Commissioners can give no opinion on Mr. M'Devitt's decision, except a judicial opinion after a rehearing of the case. They have not tendered him any advice on the subject. He will, doubtless, employ an interpreter when necessary."

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have been informed that the woman had applied for a rehearing, but had been ordered to pay costs; and also that, while if she had got a decision at the proper time her rent would have been reduced, she had had to pay the old rent ever since.

POST OFFICE—APPOINTMENT OF POSTMASTERS.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware that Mr. John Fraser, solicitor, who has recently been appointed postmaster in Keith, is the agent for the Liberal party in that district; whether there is any precedent for the appointment of a lawyer in practice as postmaster; and, whether he has considered the undue advantage which must be given to a lawyer and political agent by the knowledge of the contents of telegrams both on legal and political business?

MR. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member I beg to state that Mr. Fraser was nominated for the postmastership of Keith by the Lords of the Treasury. At the time I confirmed his appointment I did not know that he was the agent for the Liberal Party, nor had I any idea what his politics were. The only point I had to satisfy myself upon was whether he was a suitable person. I may say that there are three other instances in Scotland of post-offices being held by practising lawyers, and I have no reason for supposing that in any of these cases an improper use is made of information which their official position gives them. I understand that Memorials are in course of signature which show that the appointment of Mr. Fraser has given great satisfaction to the majority of the inhabitants of the district.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has not already received a Memorial, influentially signed in the district, protesting against the injustice to the public by access being given by this appointment of a solicitor in practice to confidential telegrams from other solicitors?

MR. FAWCETT: I know that this appointment has created some dissatisfaction. Indeed, I find that no appointments give absolute satisfaction. I have not had time to compare the Memorials; but I believe that I correctly stated just now that this appointment has given general satisfaction to a great majority of the people of the district.

MR. GIBSON: Has the Postmaster General ever yet been at liberty to overrule appointments made by the Lords of the Treasury?

MR. FAWCETT: Yes, Sir; that is constantly done. When I receive a nomination of the Treasury I studiously avoid making any inquiries about politics or religion. All I do is to make inquiry as to character, and whether the person is suitable to carry on the business.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman know whether it is true, as I have been informed since, that Mr. Fraser has acted, and continues to act, as the political agent of a Member of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. FAWCETT: I have stated that I always avoided making inquiries, and I had not made any inquiries about this appointment; but, as the hon. Member asked me a question, I should be wanting in frankness if I did not say that I had heard—not from anyone connected with the Government, but from someone I do not know—that immediately Mr. Fraser received that appointment he ceased to act as agent for the Liberal Party. Whether that is the case or not I do not know.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I beg to give Notice that, in consequence of this appointment, and of a similar appointment in Londonderry, I shall move a reduction of the Post Office Vote in Committee of Supply.

MR. MACFARLANE: At the same time, Sir, I will ask whether, if it is inconsistent for a solicitor to be a postmaster, the same rule does not apply to procurators fiscal and sheriff's clerks who are private agents to landlords?

LAW OF LIBEL—THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked Mr. Attorney General, If he will revise the functions of the Public Prosecutor in cases of criminal informations for libel, so as to provide for a hearing being given to the accused before the official fiat is issued?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, I do not think it will be necessary to revise any instructions to the Director of Prosecutions, so as to make it obligatory on him in all cases to hear the persons against whom complaint is made before granting his fiat. He has that power now within his discretion, and to make it obligatory in all cases might, in some cases, tend to defeat justice. But I think I shall meet my hon. Friend's wishes if I call the attention of the Director of Prosecutions to the desirability of considering in all cases whether he will not hear the persons complained of before granting the fiat for the prosecution.

SCOTLAND—EDINBURGH CASTLE.

Mr. DICK PEDDIE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been directed to the condition of the old hall of state in Edinburgh Castle, which is now used as the hospital of the barracks; and, whether he proposes to take any steps to restore this historical building to its original form, and to apply it to some use more suitable to its character than that to which it is now applied.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that the attention of the Government had be called by the municipal authorities of Edinburgh to this and many other subjects affecting Edinburgh Castle; they were now under consideration, but no decision had been arrived at.

THE CENSUS — ESTIMATED POPULATION, 1884.

Mr. CROPPER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can state what the Registrar General estimates the population of England will be, and also the population of Scotland, in the middle of the present year?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, on the hypothesis that the rate of increase since the Census of 1881 continues the same as it was in the period between the last Census and the last but one, the Registrar General estimates that the population of England and Wales in the middle of 1884 will be 27,132,449. The estimated population of Scotland at the same period is 3,866,521.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF THOMAS WALSH.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Postmaster General, If it is the fact that Thomas Walsh, Postmaster at Castle Townsend, county Cork, who was sentenced to four months' imprisonment under the Crimes Act for writing a threatening Letter, was at first suspended from the Postal service, but was, after his release, restored to his functions; whether it is the case that Postal employés imprisoned under the Coercion Act, who were never convicted nor brought to trial, were afterwards refused reinstatement upon release; why an exception was made in the case of Walsh, who was not only convicted by the magistrates, but whose sentence was confirmed on appeal by the County Court Judge; and, whether it is usual for a convicted criminal to be retained in the service of the Department?

Mr. FAWCETT: Thomas Walsh was restored to the postmastership to which the hon. Member refers because it was considered that the action of the Lords Justices was virtually the same as saying that he was innocent of the crime. I am not aware of any such case as that to which the hon. Member refers in the latter part of the Question. If he will direct my attention to any particular case I shall be glad to give him an answer.

Mr. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the case of the telegraphist at Cappagh, who, upon mere suspicion——

Mr. FAWCETT: If the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question I will endeavour to answer it. I could not find any case.

TRADE AND NAVIGATION — THE MONTHLY RETURNS.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any objection to altering the form of the monthly Return relating to the Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom, so as to distinguish separately the figures in relation to Irish imports and exports?

Mr. J. HOLMS, in reply, said, that to give separate figures for Ireland in the monthly trade and navigation accounts would swell the Return enormously, and would probably give rise to similar demands for England and Scotland, with the result that there would be four monthly Returns—one for England, one for Scotland, one for Ireland, and one for the United Kingdom—instead of one as at present. Such a number of Returns would be undesirable, even if there were any objects to be gained by a separate monthly Return for Ireland. The facts as to the foreign trade of Ireland, carried on directly with foreign countries, were, however, substantially in the annual Statement of Trade, which gives the total imports and exports at each port of the United Kingdom, with the quantities and values of the principal articles at the principal ports.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SUICIDE OF A PRISONER.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that a prisoner named Anthony Welsh committed suicide in Her Majesty's Prison at Durham on Wednesday, the 5th instant, by hanging himself to the bell-pull in his cell on the morning of his admission; about three hours thereafter; how it was possible for such a crime to be perpetrated in open day in a prison, and by such a method, without attracting his warder's attention; is the Governor of Durham Prison a Military gentleman; and are a large proportion of the prison officers, male, ex-soldiers or ex-policemen; have any complaints reached him as to alleged ill-treatment of any Military prisoner in Durham by any of these officers; have any prisoners, Military or Civilian, been found dead in their cells at Durham; and, if so, how many cases have been reported within the last eighteen months; if an inquest follows in such cases before a coroner and a jury of citizens of Durham; at such inquiry has the prison surgeon proved, before coroner and jury, that the cell in which the dead body was found was kept in winter at a warmer temperature than that of the bedrooms of many gentlemen; do the prison rules permit the infliction of flogging as a punishment on a Military prisoner by the mere order of the Governor; and, has the Colonel Governor presided on any Sunday afternoon at as many as three courts martial upon as many prisoners, and have those prisoners been sentenced and flogged during the same week?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, it was true that a military prisoner named Welsh did commit suicide in Durham Gaol three hours after admission. An inquest had been held. Flogging was not allowed on a mere order from the Governor.

POST OFFICE—DELIVERIES IN MANCHESTER.

Mr. SLAGG asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in view of arrangements which are now in progress to extend the evening delivery of letters to certain towns, he will make that provision in favour of the city of Manchester?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, the revision of the deliveries of letters in Manchester and Salford, including an evening delivery, both in the central districts and in the suburbs, was at present being considered. The necessary inquiries were in a forward state; and he hoped before long to come to a decision on the subject.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a very strong feeling is arising in Ireland against the Sunday Closing Act, owing to the conduct of the police and of the magistracy; whether he will make inquiry as to the number of prosecutions recently brought under the Act against respectable licensed vintners of known National politics before magistrates whose politics are known to be the reverse, and the penalties imposed; whether he will inquire into the circumstances under which Mr. James Phelan, of Aughrim, county Wicklow, was fined on Thursday last by the Rathdrum Bench, on the ground that while supplying bonâ fide travellers he kept his doors open longer than the magistrates thought he had any right; and, whether he will recommend that the fine be remitted?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I do not think there is any reason to suppose that the Constabulary have been influenced in any action they have taken by the political opinions of the persons concerned. I am aware, however, that one County Inspector has taken a view different from that generally accepted as to the duties of the police with regard to persons found on licensed premises during prohibited hours. I am making special inquiries on this point, so as to prevent misapprehension, and to secure that no proceedings shall be taken unless fully warranted by the facts. With regard to the case of Mr. Phelan, mentioned in the Question, it appears that he was fined for having his premises open longer than was necessary for supplying *bonâ fide* travellers who had entered, the rule in these cases being that the door should be opened only for admission of the travellers, and at once closed. In the present instance it was proved that the door remained open for a quarter of an hour, during which time no person entered, and that during that time a number of persons, not *bonâ fide* travellers, were in close proximity outside the door, and might have been supplied with drink. The publican had the right of appeal, but did not exercise it.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE FARNEY TENANTS' DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that at the last Castleblayney Quarter Sessions Judge Barron refused to listen to the solicitor engaged by the Farney Tenants' Defence Association, because he was not engaged by individual tenants; whether it is true that hundreds of ejectments had been served on these tenants, who combined to take a common defence through their association; what notice the Government propose to take of the Judge's refusal to allow a defence to be made; is it the fact that many of the ejectments thus granted by him without defence have just been served for a year and a half's rent on the Bath estate; and, that the tenants were quite willing to pay their rents had the Judge granted time?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Government have no official cognizance of these matters.

THE WESTERN PACIFIC—SUPPRESSION OF OUTRAGES.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What steps Her Majesty's Government have taken in consequence of the Report of the Commission on the Western Pacific, stating that as regards the greater part of the vast area to which the Western Pacific Order in Council refers the provisions of that Order have been almost wholly inoperative, and in some respects have perhaps produced results mischievous rather than beneficial, and that any considerable delay in placing upon a more satisfactory footing the control over the British subjects in the Western Pacific will be perilous, and in all probability attended with calamitous results; and, whether any Bill dealing with the office and jurisdiction of the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific will be brought before the House during the present Session?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, my hon. and learned Friend having unfortunately been on the high sea has not heard the answer which I made to a similar Question about a month ago. I then stated that Her Majesty's Government had not taken any steps, one of the principal reasons for not doing so being that the question had been very much affected by the action of the Inter-Colonial Congress at Sydney; and until we see what results from that we cannot come to any determination. As to the last part of the Question, therefore, it is not possible to say whether any legislation will be proposed this Session.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Powers besides the Government of Germany have addressed remonstrances to Her Majesty's Government in consequence of acts of cruelty committed in the Western Pacific by the officers and crews of vessels sailing under the British flag; whether similar remonstrances have been addressed by Her Majesty's Government to Foreign Powers; whether any negotiations have been entered into between Her Majesty's Government and any Foreign Powers, having for their object the suppression of disorders and atrocities in the Western Pacific; and, whether any Papers or Correspondence on this subject will be laid upon the Table of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, there have been no remonstrances received from or addressed to any Foreign Power with regard to such occurrences other than the communications received from the German Government on the subject. No negotiations with any Foreign Powers or other correspondence have taken place; but the Western Pacific Committee, whose Report has lately been laid before Parliament, was appointed with a view to the consideration of the course to be taken for the repression of outrages and acts of violence, and it will be a principal question whether any Foreign Power should be invited to co-operate in this matter.

MR. GORST: I beg to give Notice that, in consequence of the answers I have received, I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the Report of the Commission, and move a Resolution.

MR. O'DONNELL: Does the noble Lord know whether the French Government have carried out their threat to send a ship of war to prevent the Slave Trade being carried on under the British flag?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Will the hon. Member give Notice of that Question?

MR. O'DONNELL: The statement is in the Blue Book.

CONVICT PRISONS—(ENGLAND AND WALES)—WORMWOOD SCRUBBS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why, in the Report of the Directors of Convict Prisons for the year 1882-3, there is no Report furnished from the Chaplain of Wormwood Scrubbs Prison, as in the case of the other Convict Prisons; and, if he will state the number of prisoners of each religion now at Wormwood Scrubbs?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, in the year 1882-3 the establishments of Millbank and Wormwood Scrubbs Prisons were worked together. There would, in future, be a separate Chaplain's Report. There were 501 Protestants and 439 Roman Catholic prisoners in the latter prison.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION—SHAKESPEARE IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is a fact that the schoolmistress of the Tarrant Munckton School in Dorsetshire has received a notification that every girl under ten years of age at her examination will have to repeat a hundred lines of Shakespeare, and if over that age two hundred lines; what advantage is anticipated from such study to children who are chiefly of the agricultural labourer class; and, if he will recommend that some other course of instruction may be substituted which is likely to be of more value to them in after life?

MR. MUNDELLA: It is not a fact, Sir, that the schoolmistress of Tarrant Munckton, or any other teacher, has received such a notification as that referred to in the hon. Member's Question. When children reach the Sixth and Seventh Standards—which, I regret to say, only about 3½ per cent stay long enough to attain to—they may, if the managers choose to take class subjects, learn during the year 150 lines from Shakespeare, or any other standard author. Children under 10 years of age are at the most required to learn a few simple verses of poetry. I am informed by the correspondent of this school that Shakespeare has never been taught in it. The very few elder scholars in it—only three or four altogether—have been learning the required number of lines from Macaulay's "Lays."

INDIA—THE BOMBAY REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in a recent report of Mr. Pritchard of the Bombay Revenue Department:—

> "The whole district of Ahmedabad has been farmed to a single individual for a period of three years on his guaranteeing a minimum annual revenue of Rs. 73,525;"

whether the acceptance by Government of the tender of this farmer of the drink traffic at Ahmedabad obliges the Government to afford him facilities for the spread of his trade among the population until at least he has recouped his annual payment of Rs. 73,000, together with a reasonable profit; and, if this is the reason why, as stated in the *Bombay Gazette*—

> "The collector encourages him by means of licences and the keeping open of shops at late hours and during the Holi festival, when the closing of shops was hitherto thought necessary from time immemorial for police reasons?"

MR. J. K. CROSS: Sir, the arrangement referred to is connected with the introduction throughout the Ahmedabad district of the "Sadr Distillery" system. The holder of the Sadr Distillery undertakes to pay a "still-head" duty of two rupees a gallon on all liquor distillery, and not less in this case than Rs.73,000 a-year. The facilities which Government give the contractor consist in the permission to sell the liquor, of which he has the monopoly of manufacture, in a certain number of shops. These shops numbered 54 in 1881 for a district with an area of 3,800 square miles and a population of 860,000—or one liquor shop for every 16,000 inhabitants. This number has been reduced since 1881. The consumption of the city of Ahmedabad—population about 120,000—was, in 1881, 27,000 gallons, with a tax of two rupees; against 35,000 gallons in 1879, when the tax was one rupee and one anna per gallon. In the whole district the consumption of spirits in 1881 was 47,000 gallons. I have not been able to trace the reference to *The Bombay Gazette*, and I may say that, in asking Questions on the authority of newspapers, it would be convenient if the hon. Member would give dates.

ARMY—MILITARY RIOT AT NEWTOWNARDS.

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been drawn to *The Belfast Evening Telegraph* of the 6th instant, and to *The Belfast News Letter* and *Northern Whig* of the 7th instant, in all of which papers appears a report of some exceedingly unsoldierlike conduct on the part of some privates belonging to the 2nd Battalion Royal Enniskilling Fusiliers, at Newtownards, county Down; and, whether, as it would appear that the disturbance of the 5th instant is by no means the first one occasioned by them, he is prepared to direct that those men be punished for disturbing the peaceful inhabitants of Newtownards?

MR. SEXTON said, that before the Question was answered, he desired to ask whether the soldiers of this battalion were not mostly Catholics; whether three of them had not been lately set upon, and one savagely beaten; whether the Orangemen of the Castletown True Blue Lodge did not indulge in exasperating conduct towards them; whether those Catholic soldiers, on their way to and from Divine Service, had not been mocked by cries of "To h—— with the Pope;" whether they were not harassed and beaten by Orangemen; and whether the Government would take any steps to prevent these Orange rowdies from further molesting the soldiers?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have received a Report from the General Officer commanding at Belfast as to the occurrence referred to in this Question. The riot took place on the 5th; but it was provoked originally by the ill-treatment of some soldiers by the town roughs, known as corner boys. A Court of Inquiry is sitting, and steps will be taken to punish the offenders, if identified, and to prevent any recurrence of further acts of disturbance. I cannot ascertain that bad feeling has existed between the military and civilians at this station. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member below the Gangway, as the Report is not voluminous, I cannot undertake to give a specific answer to each of his inquiries. There is reason to believe that a considerable number of the soldiers of this regiment are Roman Catholics, and the riot was provoked by insults which they received.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—SUPPLY OF HORSE ARTILLERY.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been drawn to the following, in *The Standard* of the 10th March:—

> "Everyone hopes that the battery of Horse Artillery, asked for since the experience of the last fight, will arrive in time for the next engagement. It is not too much to say that two-thirds of our casualties in the last battle were wholly due to the refusal of the Military authorities at home to comply with the request

made that a battery of Artillery should accompany the Force to El Teb;"

whether his own information coincides with the statement therein made; and, also, to state the words of the orders which were sent to the General Officer Commanding in Cairo, and to General Graham, to make any demand for Horse or Field Artillery which they might consider necessary, and to quote the information he has recently received that General Graham is not going to employ any field guns in the Expedition to Osman Digma's Camp at Tamanieb Wells?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have no information bearing out the statement made by the Correspondent of *The Standard.* On the 5th of March General Stephenson telegraphed—

> "Graham reports, if we operate against enemy near Suakin, battery of Horse Artillery very desirable. I recommend application be complied with."

On the following day I telegraphed to General Graham—

> "Is it desirable to obtain Horse Artillery from Cairo, considering time required for transport to Suakin? Presume enemy has no Artillery. I leave you to decide. General Stephenson authorized to comply with demands from you."

On the 7th of March General Graham telegraphed to me that he had sent the following message to General Stephenson:—

> "Can do without battery and without more horses."

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN)—DEFEAT OF OSMAN DIGNA.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any further intelligence with regard to the reported fighting in the Soudan to-day?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It may be convenient to the House that I should read a telegram which has been received at the War Office from General Graham. The telegram, which is dated "Osman Digna's Camp, 13th March, 11.40 A.M.," is in these terms—

> "Camp taken after hard fighting since 8 o'clock. Killed, over 70, among whom Montresor, Almack, H. Stewart, Naval Brigade; Aitken, Royal Highlanders; Ford, York and Lancaster; about 100 wounded."

MR. TOTTENHAM: Have the Government any reason to suppose that these figures are not accurate, as there is a much greater proportion of killed to the wounded than usual?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the telegram which I have read is the only one which has been received at the War Office, and I cannot, therefore, give to the House any further information. I may, however, perhaps be permitted to say that I have telegraphed to General Graham, congratulating him on the success which he has gained, and on the conduct of his gallant troops, and asking him to report fully as to details, and also to report fully on the situation.

SIR HENRY TYLER: I beg to ask the noble Lord whether his attention has been called to a telegram in *The Daily Telegraph* to-day——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: That is a Question which does not arise out of the Question of the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham).

SIR HENRY TYLER: I will postpone it till Monday.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF PETER KANGLEY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a case heard by the Duleek (county Meath) Petty Sessions Bench, on the 8th ultimo, in which the Inland Revenue Department prosecuted Peter Kangley, a herd in the employment of Mr. St. George Osborne, J.P., for having killed a hare with a gun, and for having carried the gun without an Excise licence; whether the prosecution was set on foot, through the Police, by Colonel S. H. Smith, J.P. who arrested the Defendant on the occasion in question, took him to the Duleek Police Station, giving him in charge to the Police, and is alleged to have reported that he had seen him kill the hare; whether, at the hearing, Colonel Smith swore that he neither saw, nor had said he saw, the Defendant shoot the hare, and both the Chairman (Captain Nicholson) and Mr. M'Carthy, R.M. opposed the examination of Constable Whittaker, upon the ground, as stated by the Chairman, that his evidence "would only make it appear that Colonel Smith told a lie;" whether Constable Whittaker swore that Colonel Smith told him he had seen the Defendant shoot the hare; whether, nevertheless, the charge of shooting the hare was dismissed; whether Mr. Osborne, J.P. the employer of the Defendant, took part in the hearing of the case, and in the decision upon it; whether the Defendant had a magisterial licence for possession of the gun; whether Colonel Smith, J.P. the witness, gave his evidence from the bench, remained upon the bench during the hearing of the case, made observations upon the prosecution and the evidence, and took part in the deliberation and decision of the magistrates; and, if it be not permitted to magistrates to adjudicate in cases in which they are witnesses, or to oppose the examination of a witness on the ground that it may discredit a previous witness, what notice will be taken of the conduct of Colonel Smith and the language of Captain Nicholson and Mr. M'Carthy?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the reports of these two cases showed a difference of recollection as to what actually occurred. There appeared to have been an irregular discussion; but he did not think that there was any reason to suppose that the cases were not properly adjudicated upon. It appeared that Mr. Smith and Mr. Osborne merely joined in an irregular conversation that took place. It was not usual for magistrates to sit upon the Bench in cases where they were interested, and he thought that in this case it would certainly have been better if they had not done so. Mr. M'Carthy objected to the evidence of Constable Whittaker—not on the grounds stated, but because it was irrelevant. It appeared that the man had a magisterial licence, and not an Excise licence, and for this he was fined.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether, in similar cases, two men had not been previously sentenced to two months' imprisonment for the same offence, and why this *employé* of the magistrate had not been dealt with in a similar way?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) ACT—THE HEREFORD ELECTION PETITION.

Mr. RAIKES asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the circumstances connected with the withdrawal of the Petition against the last Election for Hereford; whether he is aware that the Petition presented against that Return was withdrawn at the last moment in consequence of an arrangement signed on behalf of the Liberal Party in Hereford by several persons, including Mr. Scobie, who has since been appointed an Official Receiver in Bankruptcy by the President of the Board of Trade; whether that agreement did, among other provisions, stipulate that one of the present sitting Members for Hereford should apply for and accept the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds before Easter 1882 (an engagement which has not been carried out), and that the first vacancy occurring in the representation of Hereford during the present Parliament should be filled up by the Conservative Party without opposition by the Liberal Party; whether he is prepared to move for the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to inquire into this matter; and, what other steps, if any, he proposes to take in order to maintain purity of election, and to afford to the sitting Members for Hereford an opportunity of explaining this transaction?

Mr. R. T. REID: In consequence of the form in which this Question is put, I would ask the permission of the House to say one word before the Attorney General replies to it. I wish to say in the strongest possible manner that I have not at any time been party or privy, directly or indirectly, to any bargain, agreement, or understanding of any sort or kind, relating either to the withdrawal of an Election Petition, or to the representation of the City of Hereford in Parliament. Any arrangement that may have been made between the Petitioners or any other persons was wholly without my knowledge or authority; and I have not, and will not, pay any regard to anything of the kind.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, I have not called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the circumstances connected with the alleged agreement to withdraw the Petition against the return for the City of Hereford. I have not—because it is not my duty to do so. I have no information of any kind upon the subject, except that which is to be derived from the statement of the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) the other night. Every Member of the Government had the same opportunity as I had of hearing that statement, and some took advantage of the opportunity and heard the hon. Member's speech, which I did not. For the same reason I cannot answer the numerous Questions put to me by the right hon. Gentleman as to the details of the alleged agreement. I know nothing of them; but probably he can obtain the information he seeks from the hon. Member for Evesham, who, I believe, was a rejected candidate at the election to which the Question refers. But I think I ought to say that, in my opinion, if any Petitioner who is in possession of evidence which may affect a Member's seat withdraws the Petition for any consideration given to him so to do, he principally, and also all concerned, are guilty of conduct which cannot be justified. But at the time of the alleged agreement such a withdrawal constituted no crime, and there is nothing of which I could take official cognizance. Of course, the House can deal with the conduct of its own Members; but we have heard both hon. Members for the City of Hereford state upon their honour that they had taken no share of any kind in connection with this alleged agreement. The right hon. Gentleman seems to complain that the agreement has not been fulfilled. I need scarcely point out that it is not the business of the House to see to the carrying out of such an objectionable contract. I will only add, in reply to the Question as to what steps I propose taking to preserve the purity of election, that I have taken the step of submitting to the House the provision in the Corrupt Practices Act that such an agreement to withdraw a Petition shall constitute a crime, and the House has been pleased to concur in that proposition. I trust this enactment will put an end to any such agreement as the one suggested in the Question. As I understand, both the hon. Members for Hereford have given assurances on their honour that they were not parties to the transaction which is alleged.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Only one of them. ["Both, both!"]

MR. RAIKES: I now beg to ask the senior Member for Hereford (Mr. Pulley) a Question of which I have given him private Notice—whether he intends to ask for a Committee of this House to inquire into the circumstances?

MR. PULLEY: I beg to say I have received no private Notice from the right hon. Gentleman, and that such is not my intention.

MR. RAIKES: I sent the Notice to the hon. Member by letter on the previous day.

MR. PULLEY: It did not reach me.

MR. RAIKES said, he was sorry for that. In consequence of the reply which he had received, he should take the earliest opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the subject of his Question, and move a Resolution in reference to it.

ARMY—"MIXED" GUARDS.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If the following are correct details of "mixed guards" mounted at Aldershot and the Curragh Camp within the past month:—18th, 21st, and 23rd February, Aldershot, 1st Brigade Guard—Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer, and Bugler furnished by 1st or 2nd Brigade; Privates furnished by 3rd Brigade; 5th March, Curragh Camp; Main Guard—Officer, Sergeant, Bugler, one Corporal, and six Privates, Royal Scots Regiment; one Corporal, twelve Privates, Rifle Brigade; whether these are typical instances of what is of every day occurrence at these stations; whether Officers commanding Battalions at Cork, Dover, Aldershot, the Curragh, and elsewhere, have repeatedly protested against the system; and, whether it is intended to prohibit the continuance of such practices in Home garrisons, as being likely to be subversive of discipline, and the efficient training of young soldiers?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, before answering the hon. Member's Question, I should explain, with reference to the answer given on the 3rd of March, that the inquiries then made by the Adjutant General were limited to Portsmouth and Dublin, with the result stated in that answer, and I regret that the information furnished to me was imperfect. From information since received, it appears that the details given in the Question of mixed guards at Aldershot and the Curragh are correct. At present these are typical instances of frequent occurrence at the stations named. The cause at Aldershot is that a battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers recently embarked for India, being in excess of the Indian Establishment, taking into account the number left in India by the battalion returning home, left behind upwards of 400 duty men, with scarcely any officers or non-commissioned officers. These have, therefore, had to be detailed for duty with other corps in order to equalize the duties and to give all ranks the same number of nights in bed. A similar cause has led to similar results at the Curragh. Protests have only been received from officers commanding three battalions. Although such a practice would not be sanctioned if regiments were equally proportioned in respect of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men available for duty, it is not intended to prohibit the mixing of guards when so doing is, in the opinion of the General Officer commanding, for the good of the Service.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—KINSALE FISHERY PIER.

Mr. DEASY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is a fact that £7,500 was granted by the Treasury, £8,500 advanced on loan on the security of the rates of the Kinsale Town and Harbour Commissioners, and £3,000 given as contribution by the Kinsale Harbour Commissioners, making in all a sum of £19,000, for the building of the Kinsale Fishery Pier; if it is a fact that the contract for the works is under £14,000; and, if he will cause a Return to be made of the expenditure made, or contemplated to be made, between the amount of the contract and this sum of £19,000, and specify in detail the amount paid for surveying, for compensation, and to whom the several amounts have been paid, or are to be paid, and the amount paid or to be paid for superintendence? Also, if it is a fact that the Board of Works have designed plans for the Kinsale Fishery Pier, at a cost (according to their own declaration) of £19,000, which, when completed, will render little or no facilities for the promotion of the fisheries at Kinsale in consequence of nearly the entire quay and pier being dry at low water; if he is aware that the foundations of the quay are laid in mud, without any piling, at a depth of not more than three feet below the surface, there being, in some instances, over twenty-five feet of mud; and that, in consequence, the whole structure is likely to tumble down; if it is a fact that, in order to render the quay and pier, now in course of construction, beneficially available for fishery purposes, it would cost over £30,000 for deepening and dredging; if he is aware that a pier built at Scilly, and connected with Kinsale by a causeway, would be as useful for fishery purposes; whether a pier built at Scilly, and giving all the necessary accommodation and facilities for the promotion of the fisheries at Kinsale, would cost scarcely more than one-half of the sum of £19,000 required for the present site; and, whether it is a fact that no deepening or dredging would be required were the pier built at Scilly; and, if this is so, will he order the suspension of the works until the Report of the Pier and Harbour Commissioners will be made?

Mr. COURTNEY: The figures given by the hon. Member are correct, except that the local contribution is only £2,000. The details of the expenditure can be given when the works are complete. The scheme now in construction was adopted upon full consideration and at the instance of those locally interested. It provides a depth of 10 feet at low water, and there is no apprehension as to the stability of the work. The alternative site at Scilly was fully examined before the present one was adopted, and it was found that the works there would be more expensive, though less dredging would be required. The recent local inquiry of the Pier and Harbour Commissioners was, I understand, directed to a proposed extension of the works now in hand, and there appears no reason for suspending operations.

Mr. DEASY: I beg to give Notice that on going into Committee of Supply I shall call attention to this matter, and show that the local contribution was £3,000, instead of £2,000, as stated by the hon. Gentleman.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. E. M. ARCHDALE, J.P.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has yet come to any decision with respect to the conduct of Mr. Edward M. Archdale, J.P. who, at the Dromore inquest, admitted that he had led and arranged the Railway fares of a thousand of the men who participated in the riot at Dromore on the 1st of January; and, whether Mr. Archdale will be continued in the Commission of the Peace, and in the position of High Sheriff of the county of Fermanagh?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, there was an unavoidable delay in laying before the Lord Chancellor the Papers in this case, as they were required for the preparation of a Return which I undertook to lay on the Table in consequence of Questions put to me by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). The Papers are now before the Lord Chancellor, and he will come to a decision in the case as soon as possible.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CATHOLIC CHILDREN IN WORKHOUSES.

MR. SEXTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at a recent meeting of the Bath Board of Guardians (reported in the Liverpool *Catholic Times* of the 28th ult.), with reference to a request of the Rev. J. G. Davis that two gentlemen whom he named should be allowed to instruct the Catholic children in the workhouse in their religious duties; whether the Board refused the request, and, at the meeting above referred to, the Rev. W. Acworth, Chairman of the School Committee, spoke of Catholic doctrines as "pernicious; blasphemous fables; dangerous deceits;" referred to *The Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, supplied to the children by the Catholic clergyman, in terms described as unfit for publication; said the schoolmistress reported to him that one Catholic girl had declared "that Roman Catholics were wicked," and another that "they broke the Second Commandment, by worshipping images and praying to saints;" avowed himself "thankful to have schoolmasters and schoolmistresses to teach these truths;" and moved a resolution to place the Catholic children under the teaching of the Protestant chaplain, unless when they requested other teaching; and, what steps will be taken to secure the due discharge of the duties of the guardians of the poor, and to protect the faith and consciences of Catholic children of tender years, who are inmates of the Bath Workhouse?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, the Guardians state that they declined to grant permission for the two gentlemen to assist the Rev. Mr. Davis, as they considered that one priest could give all the necessary instruction to the 11 Roman Catholic children in the workhouse, and as they had previously declined to allow the wife and daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England to visit the inmates. We are further informed that Mr. Acworth appears to have been correctly reported, but that his remarks must not be considered as expressing the opinions of the Board of Guardians. We must record our regret that Mr. Acworth should have chosen a meeting of the Guardians as the occasion for giving expression to his peculiar opinions.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

MR. GORST asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the extreme importance to the officers and seamen of the mercantile marine that Parliament should, as soon as possible, make effectual provision against unseaworthiness and over-insurance of ships, he will proceed, at the earliest opportunity, with the Merchant Shipping Bill; and, whether he will, if necessary, ask for a Morning Sitting of the House for the discussion of the Second Reading?

MR. J. HOLMS: Sir, at the present period of the Session the President of the Board of Trade would scarcely feel justified in asking for a Morning Sitting. At the same time, he agrees entirely with the hon. Member as to the extreme importance of the measure, and hopes to proceed with it at the earliest opportunity.

AGRICULTURAL LEASEHOLDERS (IRELAND).

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any information that he can lay before the House as to the number of leaseholders of agricultural tenancies in Ireland, distinguishing between leases entered into previously to the Land Act of 1870, and those entered into subsequently?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the latest available information on the subject is that contained in the Return presented to this House in 1870. I have been in communication for some time past with my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst), and have come to the conclusion that it will be desirable to collect the information; but it requires some months to obtain it. On the last occasion it took from January to October.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS.

Mr. M'LAREN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state why the monthly Returns of Evictions in Ireland are discontinued, while the monthly Returns of Agrarian Outrages are still issued; and, whether he will cause the Eviction Returns to be completed and presented to the end of last month?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is manifestly undesirable to multiply the printing of Returns—["Oh, oh!"]—perhaps I may be allowed to proceed without interruption until the explanation or reservation is come to—I think it is undesirable to multiply the printing of Returns unnecessarily; and the Government consider that sufficient information with regard to the number of evictions is, for all practical purposes, given by the presentation of quarterly Returns, as was done during last year. A Return for this quarter will be presented at the end of this month. It is a question for consideration whether the time has not arrived when the presentation of Returns of agrarian outrages might not with advantage be similarly restricted.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—INVIOLABILITY OF TELEGRAMS.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER asked the Postmaster General, Whether the clerks in the telegraph offices are prohibited from giving any information as to the persons sending telegrams, the persons to whom they are sent, and the contents of such telegrams; and, whether any official disclosing any such information would be dismissed from the public service?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, I can assure my hon. Friend that any persons in the employment of the Post Office giving any information as to the persons sending telegrams, the persons to whom they are sent, or the contents of such telegrams, would not only be dismissed from the public service, but would, by Section 20 of the Telegraph Act of 1867, render themselves liable to prosecution. I may mention that in November last two telegraphists were convicted at Manchester of disclosing the contents of telegrams, and were sentenced—one to 12 and the other to six months' imprisonment, while a man, not in the service of the Department, who solicited the information, was also sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment.

ARMY—RECRUITS.

Lord ALGERNON PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the lowest weight at which recruits are at present enlisted for the Army is 120 pounds; and, whether the weight a soldier has to carry in complete marching order is about sixty pounds, or one-half of what may thus be his own weight?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the weight of a recruit is considered with regard to his height and chest measurement. For recruits of the lowest height—namely 5 ft. 4 in. to 5 ft. 5 in.—the minimum weight is 120 lb. Men are, however, only enlisted, if, in the opinion of the medical officer and the commanding officer, they are likely to make eligible soldiers. The weight an Infantry recruit has to carry is estimated at 41 lb. 10 oz. in time of peace, and 51 lb. 1 oz. in time of war. A recruit is not required to carry a complete kit in marching order for some time after joining.

PUBLIC HEALTH—CREMATION.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, after the statement of Mr. Justice Stephen that cremation of corpses is legal, any impediment will be thrown in the way by the Executive of thus disposing of corpses?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, as far as this is a judicial Question, it does not fall within my authority. As far as it is an administrative Question, I must say that I can give no encouragement whatever to the practice. First of all, I believe that it is a practice repugnant to the general sentiment of the people; and, in the next place, I believe that this practice might, in cases like the Liverpool poisoning case, become an obstacle to the dectection of crime.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—COLONEL SIR REDVERS BULLER.

Major General ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that Colonel Sir Redvers Buller was appointed second in command of the expedition under Major General Sir Gerald Graham, at the instance of Rear Admiral Sir William Hewett; and, if so, whether it is usual to make Military appointments at the request of Naval Officers?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The only foundation for this report is that the name of Sir Redvers Buller was mentioned in a private communication from Sir William Hewett to Lord Northbrook as that of an officer experienced in irregular warfare. That being a private communication, it cannot be laid on the Table; and I cannot, therefore, refer to the terms of it. Of course, it is not usual to make military appointments at the request of naval officers. In the present case I take the fullest responsibility for the appointment.

INDIA—PETROLEUM ACT, 1871—THE BURNING OF THE "AURORA."

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the burning of the ship *Aurora*, laden with kerosene oil in the Calcutta river, and to the official report of the engineer, showing that with a different wind or a different tide the whole of the shipping would have been destroyed; and, whether vessels similarly laden are allowed to go into crowded docks in this Country, or are allowed to anchor in rivers or harbours?

Mr. J. HOLMS: Sir, the Board of Trade have received no information as to the burning of the ship *Aurora*, laden with kerosene oil, in the Hooghly, beyond the telegraphic accounts which have appeared in the newspapers. I am informed by the India Office that the last mail left Calcutta on the 19th, and that the fire took place on the 20th ultimo, so that no account could have reached this country otherwise than by telegraph. As regards this country, the Petroleum Act, 1871, authorizes harbour authorities to make bye-laws, subject to the approval of the Board of Trade, with regard to vessels laden with petroleum and kerosene oil, and under this Act most of the harbour authorities have made regulations.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — THE MEDICAL ATTENDANT AT BALLYCOTTON.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Dr. Allen, of Midleton, has been appointed medical attendant to the Ballycotton police station; whether Ballycotton is twelve miles from Midleton, and entirely outside the Midleton Dispensary district; whether there is no regular means of communication either by train, car, or telegraph between the two places; whether it is one of the regulations of the police force that the post of medical attendant shall, if possible, be held by the dispensary doctor of the district, insomuch that a dispensary doctor holding such a post, if he should resign the dispensary, must also give up his Constabulary charge; whether the regulation also provides that a doctor other than the dispensary doctor is only to be appointed in the event of the dispensary doctor not wishing to have medical charge of the Constabulary, and in such a case directs that the residence of the doctor appointed shall be as central as possible in the district; whether Dr. Riordan, in whose dispensary district Ballycotton is, and who resides at Cloyne, in the centre of his district, was also a candidate for the post to which Dr. Allen was appointed, communication from Ballycotton to Midleton being actually through Cloyne, which is also the nearest telegraph office to Ballycotton; whether it is the fact that the appointment in question was formerly held by Dr. Dwane, Dr. Riordan's predecessor in the dispensary appointment, and that on his death Dr. Riordan's application for the post of Constabulary Medical Attendant was, in defiance of the regulation referred to, refused for purely political reasons, the gentleman appointed being a Protestant, resident however in the district; whether, on the resignation of the latter, Dr. Riordan has now been similarly treated, the appointment being now given to a Protestant doctor resident outside the district, Dr. Riordan being a Catholic; whether it is the case that Dr. Riordan's qualifications are of the highest kind, he having been elected to the position of Dispensary Doctor at Cloyne by the unanimous votes of the guardians, Conservative as well as National, and having been previously medical officer in the Killeagh Dispensary District, where he also held the appointment of Medical Attendant to the Constabulary; and, whether the police themselves have made numerous complaints as to the non-appointment of Dr. Riordan, he having during the previous appointment been frequently attending them and their families, though not their appointed physician?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the statement in question, with regard to the relative positions of the places mentioned, was fairly accurate. It was true that Dr. Riordan twice applied for the position referred to; but it was not correct that his non-appointment was in any way attributable to a question of religion. Dr. Allen was selected because, in the opinion of the Inspector General, he was the most eligible candidate. As regarded the regulation as to the appointment of dispensary doctors, that regulation had been withdrawn, because it was found not to work satisfactorily.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE CHIEF MANKOROANE.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Colonial Office have received any information as to actual or threatened attacks upon Mankoroane by persons from Stellaland?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, we have received several telegrams announcing intended acts of aggression on Mankoroane; but they have not hitherto given us information proceeding from sources above suspicion. The last we received was on the 5th of this month, and was to the effect that a message from Daumas — one of Mankoroane's White advisers—under date of the 4th, announced that the freebooters were marching to Tauung in force, and that scouts had left them three hours from that place. Eight days have elapsed, and we have heard nothing further, so I hope that it may be untrue.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE)—NATIVE EMPLOYES.

Lord ELCHO asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Budget Committee, recently appointed at the instigation of Sir Evelyn Baring in Egypt, has, on the grounds of economy, recommended the dismissal of numerous Native employés; whether it is true that Nubar Pasha has declined to consent to the proposal, alleging, as arguments against it, its certain unpopularity, as well as the uncertain duration of the term of the British occupation; and, whether, if this is true, Her Majesty's Government intend in this instance to compel the Native Ministry to follow the advice of Her Majesty's representatives in Egypt?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, at the suggestion of Sir Evelyn Baring, a Committee was appointed early in the year by the Egyptian Government, with a view to effect reductions in the proposed Expenditure of 1884. Two Reports have been received which deal with the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Public Works, War and Marine, and with the Packet Post and Customs Services. Various reforms and reductions are proposed; but until the inquiry is completed, it is not possible to say how far these proposals will be adopted, nor to what officials the reductions will apply. Her Majesty's Government is not aware that Nubar Pasha has expressed any opinion on the proposals, and is not acquainted with what advice Sir Evelyn Baring may have given on the subject.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will the noble Lord lay the Report upon the Table at once?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; not at once, but in the ordinary course.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Why not?

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CATHOLIC CHILDREN IN NOTTINGHAM WORKHOUSE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that the Catholic children belonging to the Nottingham Workhouse are daily sent to a Board School, although there is a Catholic Public Elementary School within a quarter of an hour's walk by a quiet road; whether the same children are deprived of adequate instruction in their religion, but have been several times illegally sent to the Protestant teaching given in the Board School; whether the Government Inspector has more than once animadverted upon this breach of the Law; whether the bishop and clergy of Nottingham have repeatedly, but in vain, remonstrated with the guardians upon their conduct; whether the Local Government Board have ineffectually declared to the guardians that the Law requires that the religion of the children should be recognized in the choice of their school; and, also, what steps he proposes to take to vindicate the religious liberty of the poor people entrusted to his Department?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, it is the case that Catholic children from the workhouse attend a school of the Nottingham School Board, and that there is a Catholic public elementary school within a distance of a mile from the workhouse. As to the religious instruction of the children, when this arrangement was last the subject of correspondence with the Guardians, we were informed that the Roman Catholic clergy were allowed to visit the children every Saturday at any time between the hours of 9 A.M. and 5 P.M.; that the children go to the Roman Catholic Church every Sunday morning; that the Board room is set apart for a Catholic Service each Sunday afternoon, the children never failing to attend the Service, and that the elder children attend Mass. As to attendance at Protestant teaching in the Board school, we received information in June last that some of the children had not been withdrawn from the religious teaching at the school, and we instructed one of our Inspectors to ascertain the facts by personal inquiry. It was found that some of the young children had not been withdrawn in consequence of the required notification not having been given. We were then informed by the Guardians that the superintendent had been instructed, in future, to give this information in every case immediately on the admission of a child; and as we have received no complaint on the subject since, we assume that these instructions have been complied with. We have endeavoured to induce the Guardians to send the children to the Catholic public elementary school, and it is a matter of regret to us that they have not done so. We have no reason to doubt that those mentioned in the Question have remonstrated. We have not, however, stated that the Guardians are infringing the law in the course which they have adopted. On the contrary, it appears to us that they are within their legal powers in sending the children to the Board school, provided that the children only receive secular instruction, and are altogether withdrawn from the religious instruction at the school.

ARMY—THE ABOLITION OF PURCHASE —THE RETURN.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, When the Return relating to the cost of abolition by purchase, and granted by the House last year, will be presented?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: Sir, the portion of the Return which refers to past expenditure is ready, and can be presented forthwith, if desired. The remainder of the Return is a forecast of expenditure for the next 20 years under two systems of promotion and retirement. It can only be arrived at by calculation, made separately for every regiment of Cavalry and Infantry, of the chances of life and retirement for each officer during 20 years. The labour of such a Return will be enormous; and I am unable to say when, in the present over-taxed state of the War Office, the Return can be finished. But if the hon. and gallant Gentleman will consent to a slight variation in the Return, I can give him the information he seeks, based upon the calculated normal yearly cost of retirement of officers of Cavalry and Infantry under the present Warrant and under the Regulations in force before the abolition of purchase.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)— GENERAL GORDON.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any telegrams have been received from General Gordon with regard to the present condition of Khartoum; and, whether, in those telegrams, a requisition has been made for British Troops; and, if so, whether he will communicate those telegrams to the House?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following statements attributed to General Gordon by *The Times* correspondent at Khartoum—

> "There is a certainty that the emissaries of the Mahdi will succeed in raising the tribes between this (Khartoum) and Berber. This is not owing to disaffection, but to fear caused by the pronounced policy of the abandonment of the Soudan. We cannot blame them for rising when no definite sign is shown of establishing a permanent government here. . . . . Be sure of one thing. If Her Majesty's Government do not act promptly, General Graham's victory will go for nought, and with the useless expenditure of blood the effect of it will evaporate. I do not believe we shall send any more telegrams, for it is no longer a question of days, but of hours;"

and, whether, in view of these grave statements, Her Majesty's Government will reconsider their orders for the abandonment of Khartoum, and will, in co-operation with the Sovereign Power, authorize the establishment of a civilized government in that region under efficient British supervision?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I wish to say that some time ago the Prime Minister said that—

> "The Government consider it their duty to examine carefully the question how far it may be their duty to produce all the language used, all the views, and all the steps taken by General Gordon from day to day, or how far it may be their duty, in the interests of the great mission in which he is engaged, to reserve them."

In reference to that engagement, I have to say that, in the opinion of the Government, it would be extremely undesirable in the interests of the Public Service—in fact, it would be impossible—to make, at the present time, a full statement of all the information which has been received from General Gordon at Khartoum, and that to make a partial statement would be only to mislead the House. I trust, therefore, that hon. Members will not be disposed to press for a definite answer to the Questions they have on the Paper.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the noble Lord have any objection to state whether the Government are still in telegraphic communication with General Gordon?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes; telegrams have been received. The telegraph appears to have been cut for a short time; but it is, I understand, again restored between Cairo and Khartoum.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT remarked that, as it had been so publicly stated, perhaps the noble Marquess would have no objection to say whether application for British troops to be sent either to Khartoum or Berber had been made by General Gordon?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the noble Lord had not answered the last paragraph of his Question.

Subsequently,

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said: I have referred again to the Question of the hon. Member for Eye, and I find that the last part of the Question relates to the policy of the Government founded upon the statement of General Gordon's alleged views on information said to have been recently received from him. I think the hon. Member and the House will see that the answer I gave, which makes it impossible for the Government to give a full statement of the recent information received from General Gordon, makes it still more impossible for me to give any further explanation beyond that which has been already given.

LAW AND JUSTICE—ARRANGEMENT OF THE CIRCUITS.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked Mr. Attorney General, If the Order in Council published in *The London Gazette* of March 11th, for the holding of the Spring Assizes, may be regarded as the future arrangement of the circuits, or whether the subject is still under consideration by Her Majesty's Judges?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, the Order in Council referred to is the usual Order issued in reference to the Spring Assizes, and is not in any way connected with the contemplated attempt to prevent the present waste of judicial strength.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POLAND STREET WORKHOUSE.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. Hedley is the inspector upon whose Report the Board decided to allow Mr. Bliss to remain as Master of the Poland Street Workhouse, after conviction of the charges proved against him in August, 1883; whether he has recently received from the Poor Law Guardians of Holborn Union a Letter, stating that if an inquiry into the conduct of the Master of their Workhouse, which they had applied for, was conducted by Mr. Hedley, the Guardians must decline to take any part in the investigation; whether it is true that in the Poland Street Workhouse of the Westminster Union no arrangement is made for allowing persons to live together, who, being husband and wife, are both above 60 years of age, in accordance with the express provisions of sec. 33 of 10 and 12 Vic. c. 107; and, whether it is true that the Master of the said Workhouse recently threatened to kick downstairs an old man named William Warren, aged 76, who was going upstairs to see his wife, to whom he had been married for 56 years, having obtained permission to see her?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, the inquiry was held by two Inspectors, of whom Mr. Hedley was one. With regard to the Holborn Union, a similar Question was asked on the 6th instant, when I took the opportunity of expressing our entire confidence in Mr. Hedley's impartiality. With respect to arrangements for allowing husband and wife, when above 60 years of age, to live together, no such arrangements are made in the Poland Street Workhouse. On the 8th of January last we urged the Guardians to consider the subject with the view of giving effect to the intentions of the Statute, and the matter is now under the consideration of the Guardians. As to the case of Warren, I have already replied to a similar Question by the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham).

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. J. D. Bliss, the Master of the Poland Street Workhouse of the Westminster Union, has been seriously cautioned by the Guardians as to his future conduct, as directed by the Local Government Board's Letter of the 18th July last; whether, if and when so cautioned, the Master expressed any regret at having been found guilty of the charges and grave irregularities stated in that Letter to have been established against him, or gave any assurance to abstain in the future from anything calculated to give just grounds for complaint; whether the charges reported to have been established against the Master are those set forth in the Local Government Board's Letter of the 28th August last, addressed to the Guardians; whether he will lay a Copy of such Letter upon the Table of the House; and, whether, having regard to the charges enumerated in that Letter, the Local Government Board intend to continue Mr. Bliss in the office of Master of a Workhouse?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, we are informed by the Board of Guardians that the letters of the 18th of July and 28th of August last were read over to Mr. Bliss, that he was admonished by the Chairman, and seriously cautioned as to his future conduct. It was not stated whether Mr. Bliss had expressed regret or given such an assurance as is suggested in the Question. The letter of the 28th of August specifies the charges which we considered proved against Mr. Bliss. We have no objection to the production of the several letters alluded to, if they are moved for. Our decision was communicated in the letter of the 18th of July, and it is not our intention to re-open the case.

MR. GRANTHAM asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether a blind inmate of the Poland Street Workhouse, named Henry Gorman, aged 56, was removed in a dying condition from a sick ward into the insane ward of the Poland Street Workhouse about mid-day on Thursday the 20th of December last, and died within forty-eight hours afterwards; whether, during those forty-eight hours, Henry Gorman was without medicine, skilled nursing, and any nourishment whatever, with the exception of twelve ounces of suet pudding; whether the fact that the man was in a dying condition was officially reported to the master, and whether the master took any notice of such report; whether the master, Mr. J. D. Bliss, recently threatened to kick down the stairs an inmate named William Warren, aged 76, who was with Sir John Ross in the Arctic Expedition of 1823, and who was visiting his wife, also an inmate, to whom he had been married for 56 years; and, whether, as the Westminster Union comprises the parishes of St. James' Piccadilly and St.

Anne's Soho, and forms part of the Central London Sick Asylum District, all inmates of the Poland Street Workhouse requiring skilled nursing and medical treatment ought to be transferred by the guardians, in compliance with Gathorne Hardy's Act, to the Infirmary of the district in Cleveland Street?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Henry Gorman was removed from the sick ward into the ward called the insane ward, which is used for the temporary detention of insane and violent patients, in consequence of being noisy and excitable. He had been under the care of the acting medical officer, but was not considered by him to be, at the time of his removal, in a dangerous condition. He was seen on the next day and on the day following—which was the day of his death—by the acting medical officer, and on each occasion the man stated that he was better. He was during the day under the care of a paid attendant. The medical officer not having ordered special diet, the ordinary diet for the day was supplied. In addition to the suet pudding, he was, during the 48 hours preceding his death, supplied with meat for dinner on the Friday, and tea and bread and butter for breakfast and supper. The attendant, considering the man worse, gave notice to the master, who immediately communicated with the relatives, and they were with him on the Friday evening, and again on the following day. We do not understand why the deceased was not placed on special diet, at least on the Saturday, by the acting medical officer. That officer was acting temporarily, and is not now in the service of the Guardians. As to the case of William Warren, the master absolutely denies that he made the threat alleged, and there is confirmatory evidence of this. It would not be possible to remove all inmates needing medical care and skilled nursing to the Cleveland Street Infirmary, because it is not large enough to hold them. Its enlargement is under contemplation, and in the meantime it is desirable that the Guardians of each of the Unions composing the district should avail themselves of it to the fullest extent practicable.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wished to know whether the Local Government Board would consider the desirability of taking some steps to enable the old people who were over 60 years of age, and who were entitled by law to separate accommodation together, to be informed of that fact; and whether the Board would inquire whether the masters or matrons of the Metropolitan workhouses did not systematically withhold that information from the old inmates?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: That is a point which I will take into consideration.

DELIVERY OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS—THE "TIMES" AND THE EDUCATION CODE.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he is able to give any explanation of the publication in *The Times* newspaper of the New Education Code, together with an elaborate and very favourable commentary, before the text of the Code itself has been placed in the hands of honourable Members? The hon. Gentleman explained that his original Question was—

> "Whether a few copies of the Code, sufficient for not more than ten of the members, were placed in the Bill Office on Tuesday night, and whether the right hon. Gentleman will state the name of the Press man to whom an early copy of the Code was forwarded by the Education Office, by whose authority it was forwarded, and at what date?"

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, this Question is evidently put under a misunderstanding. I am informed that the Queen's printers began to deliver the Code on Tuesday afternoon, and that about 5 o'clock on that day 100 copies were sent to the Vote Office. The whole were delivered before 8 o'clock this morning. I do not know whether any copies were first given to the Press, and I have no power to influence the articles in *The Times* or any other paper.

EGYPT—MAINTENANCE OF THE ENGLISH TROOPS.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for War, When the appropriation in aid, for the year 1883-4, from the Egyptian Government, for the maintenance of English Troops in Egypt, was increased from the original estimate of £144,000 to £276,000 (page 27, Army Estimates 1884-5); and, whether any correspondence took place between the English and Egyptian

Governments upon this increase, and if there would be any objection to publish it?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, there is no increase in the rate of the contributions. The sum of £144,000 was a payment for six months; £276,000 is for a whole year. There is a slight variation in the proportion taken to the Army and Navy which accounts for the larger sum not being exactly double the smaller.

THE AFGHAN WAR — THE GRANT IN AID, 1881.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If the Imperial Grant to the Indian Government in aid of the Afghan War was sanctioned in 1880-81 by Parliament on the distinct understanding that it was to consist of a remission of a debt of £2,000,000 to India, and six annual payments of £500,000 from 1880-81 to 1885-6; and, why this arrangement is evaded by making a double payment of £1,000,000 in the present financial year, under the form of a Supplementary Estimate, presented during the last month of the financial year?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, in reply to the noble Lord, I have to remind him that the Vote to which he refers is to be taken this evening, and I will then explain the reasons for asking it.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

Mr. C. S. READ asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, If his attention has been called to the failure of the local authority of the county of Norfolk to carry out the slaughtering powers conferred upon them by the Privy Council, under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, by reason of the owner of a calf objecting to its being killed; and, if he will arm the local authority with more speedy and definite powers to slaughter all animals affected with foot and mouth disease?

Mr. DODSON, in reply, said, that notice in writing did not appear to have been given in this case, as the Order in Council required. Foot-and-mouth disease was not a fatal disorder; and as animals affected might in some cases be of very great value, the Department did not think they ought to give the power of slaughter in all cases without any relief whatever.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—THE DIVIDED PARISHES ACT, 1876—HEREFORDSHIRE.

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY asked the President of the Local Government Board, as to the parishes of Stretton Grandisome and Eggleton, in the county of Hereford, Whether it is the intention of the Government under "The Divided Parishes Act, 1876," to separate the parcel of Whitwick from the parish of which it forms part; whether the above named parishes constitute a school district, of which Whitwick is one-fifth portion; whether, the school having been built to accommodate the children of Whitwick, the proposed division will result in laying a heavier charge than at present on the areas of the remaining four-fifths of the districts; whether an answer will be given on the merits to the representation made to the Local Government Board by the rector on behalf of the parishes; and, whether the wishes of the inhabitants will have any weight with the Government in any pending arrangements?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, Whitwick is a part of the parish of Stretton Grandisome, but is entirely separated from that parish; and, after an inquiry in the district, we issued an Order in November last, under the Divided Parishes Act of 1876, annexing the isolated part of Stretton Grandisome to one of the parishes which it adjoins. This isolated part consists of 376 acres, and has only one farmhouse and two cottages, and the Divided Parishes Act was passed for the express purpose of providing for the annexation to an adjoining parish of an isolated part of a parish, such as that in the present case. Stretton Grandisome and Eggleton form one school district, and the 376 acres in the isolated part are about one-fifth of the total acreage of the school district. There is not, however, any school board for this district; and, as there is no school board rate, the separation of Whitwick does not necessitate a higher charge on the remaining part of the parish in respect of the school. But, assuming that there was a school board, it appeared at the time of the inquiry that the children from the two cottages attended a school in another parish, and if the children from these two cottages attended the schools at Stretton we should not consider it a sufficient ground for not dealing with this isolated part of the parish. We will inform the rector of our views on the question. As we have received an objection from five ratepayers, who constitute one-tenth of the ratepayers, the Order becomes provisional, and we must submit it to Parliament for confirmation.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, under the Divided Parishes Act, to increase the parish of Putley, in the county of Hereford, by about one-fifth; whether the schools have been increased at the request of the Education Department to meet the wants of the parish as it at present exists; whether any further increase of the schools will be necessary for the enlarged parish, throwing greater expense on the ratepayers; whether the parish has appealed against the proposed action of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether the wish of the parish, if again clearly expressed, would have any weight with Her Majesty's Government in any pending arrangements?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Sir, this is a case in which we have issued an Order, under the Divided Parishes Act, 1876, annexing to a parish two parts of the parish of Woolhope, which are entirely separated from that parish and adjoin the parish of Putley. We have no reason to doubt that the effect will be to increase the area of Putley by one-fifth. The Question as to school accommodation belongs to the Education Department rather than to us. An Order under the Act which I have mentioned does not affect school districts unless the Education Department gives their consent. In the present case the Department have given that consent. We have received an objection, signed by 10 ratepayers; the Order has become provisional, and we intend to submit the Order to Parliament for confirmation.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON'S PROCLAMATION.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the fact, as stated in a telegram from Paris, that "the question of the slave trade in the Soudan, as raised by General Gordon's proclamation, has given rise to an active interchange, which is still going on, of Diplomatic Notes between London and Paris," and that Lord Granville has declared to the French Cabinet "that England will only accept General Gordon's acts up to a certain point;" and, if so, whether the Government still accepts full responsibility for all the measures which General Gordon adopts; and, whether the Correspondence above referred to will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that he had referred to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and was informed that there had been no interchange of Diplomatic Notes on the subject. There was no Correspondence to lay on the Table.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

MR. BIDDELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, under the Representation of the People Bill, the present anomaly will be continued, under which a resident in a Parliamentary borough possessing a 40*s.* freehold in a county has a vote for it, while a resident in a county having a £50 freehold in a Parliamentary borough cannot vote for that borough?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that the Bill throughout maintained the distinction between the occupation vote for the borough and the property vote for the county.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. R. H PAGET asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with reference to the progress of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, he will now undertake to proceed with the Second Reading of that measure immediately after the present necessities of Supply have been disposed of, and before taking a further stage of the Representation of the People Bill?

MR. W. H. SMITH asked whether the Report of Supply would be taken after 12.30?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he was sorry that the Government had not been able to make any arrangement with the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) for the withdrawal of the block against the second reading of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, and that it was not, therefore, possible to make the arrangements which they had hoped to effect on Monday. But in the absence of the Prime Minister, whom he had not been able to see to-day, he could not answer the hon. Member's Question. He would endeavour to do so to-morrow. With regard to the Business of that evening, it would be necessary, if possible, to complete the discussion of the Supplementary Estimates. If the Report of Supply should, unfortunately, have to be postponed, the Government would put it down for to-morrow.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that he would ask a Question bearing upon the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill to-morrow; and he hoped by that time the noble Marquess would have seen the Prime Minister, and would be able to give an answer.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to answer now a Question of which I have not given him Notice—whether he can tell us if he intends to introduce the Budget before Easter or after?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am not quite certain whether I can give an answer now, as I have not been able to communicate with my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury for the last two or three days. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will put the Question some day next week.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I will repeat the Question on Monday.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN)—INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL GRAHAM.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Would the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War inform the House, Whether General Graham is still acting under the instructions which the noble Lord stated to the House had been sent to him a short time ago—namely, that he should confine himself to such offensive measures as were necessary for the defence of Suakin; or whether these instructions had been altered or modified?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the hon. Member for Northampton, I think I may state that the instructions which have been issued to General Graham have not been materially modified. A short time after General Graham's arrival at Suakin from Trinkitat he telegraphed to the Government stating the measures that he and the Admiral recommended to be taken; and we approved of the proposals which they made. I am not certain whether I communicated to the House the exact text of those telegrams; I cannot do so at the present moment, as I have not got them with me; but I should have no objection to answer a Question if the hon. Member puts one on the Paper.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) £10,000, Public Works Office, Ireland.

MR. BIGGAR said, he should like to have some explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury in regard to the working of the Tramways Act of last Session. He particularly wished to be informed how many applications had been made for works of this kind to be carried out under the Act; what steps had been taken in order to ascertain whether the applications were legitimate; and, also, what influences would be brought to bear in order to see that nothing but *bonâ fide* undertakings were sanctioned? He also wanted to know what means were taken to ascertain that the undertakings themselves were likely to pay at least the working expenses; and what would be done to see that the guarantors were not subjected to anything extraordinary in the way of expenditure in carrying out the works? He had always been an opponent, as far as possible, of the introduction of unproductive public works of any kind into Ireland quite as much as anywhere else; and he had reason to believe that the loans which were given from time to time for public works in Ireland were often given in a reckless manner. He could mention two instances which had been brought under his notice. He was informed, not long ago, that a landowner in the County of Roscommon, under this system of lending money for alleged improvements on land in Ireland, had borrowed £27,000; and he (Mr. Biggar) was able to state, on the authority of a large contractor who was thoroughly conversant with the subject, that not more than £12,000 of this amount was expended, the remaining £15,000 having been employed in paying off the private debts of the landowner. In another case, an occupying farmer had borrowed a sum of £4,000 for the purpose of carrying out improvements, and it was a common report that not more than £1,000 had been legitimately expended. He, therefore, pressed upon the hon. Gentleman the propriety of not giving a Government guarantee for a larger amount than was actually expended; and of not giving a guarantee at all in any case where there was reason to believe that the works were not really required, and where the money might not be actually expended. There was no doubt that many fictitious applications were made, and that estimates of an extravagant nature were prepared. The result was that these people obtained a rate of interest not in accordance with the amount wanted, but much larger than the actual outlay, and by these means the unfortunate ratepayers were fleeced, and made to give a guarantee for unnecessary work. The practical result was that the Government, although only guaranteeing 2 per cent on the outlay, were, in point of fact, guaranteeing 4 per cent for the work actually done. He should like to have an explanation from the hon. Gentleman on these points; and he hoped the Government would be able to bring all the influence they possessed to prevent, first of all, the ratepayers of Ireland in the guaranteed districts from having to pay an unfair rate, and also to prevent the English ratepayers from being fleeced by fictitious applications.

Mr. HEALY wished to put a question to the Secretary to the Treasury in regard to the resignation of Colonel M'Kerlie, the Chief Commissioner of the Irish Board of Works. The Nationalist Party in Ireland wanted some information as to the manner in which public appointments were made in that country? They had abstained from making any criticism upon the appointment of General Sankey, as they wished him to have a fair trial. Their attitude had been one of observation only; and whether General Sankey came from India or the North Pole it would be immaterial to them so long as he discharged properly the functions of his Office. He thought the Irish Members were entitled to know upon what principle the system of promotions was carried out in Ireland, and he might call attention to some extraordinary facts in regard to them. In this case, they had General Sankey promoted at one bound from Bombay to the Custom House at Dublin. They had Mr. Clifford Lloyd sent from Ennis to Egypt, and another gentleman—Mr. Blake—had been sent from another county in Ireland to the Bahamas. He should like to know how these promotions were carried out? They were informed by public rumour that, since Mr. Jenkinson's arrival in Ireland, and also since the Chief Secretary had taken Office in connection with that country, India had been coming steadily into favour. The public experience, however, of transplanting Indian officials had not been of a sufficiently favourable character to induce them to receive with open arms everybody who came from that country. He wanted to be informed how General Sankey obtained his promotion? Did it come from the Viceroy of India, or from the Viceroy of Ireland? If it had come from the Viceroy of India, how was it that the Marquess of Ripon had been made acquainted with the fact that a vacancy of this kind existed in Ireland? It was a remarkable fact that when they had a little office like this to fill up in Ireland they should have to go scouring across the globe for someone to put into it. General Sankey might be eminently fitted for the position; but he (Mr. Healy) protested against this system of shooting a man across 25,000 miles of country in order to fill up a small vacancy of this kind. He thought it cast a reflection on the people both at home and abroad. In the first place, it must have caused a certain amount of sourness among Indian officials that General Sankey should be deemed the only person fitted for the discharge of these duties in a country so far off as Ireland, and the appointment would probably create great dissatisfaction in India. He had no sympathy whatever with those who were of opinion that all positions in Ireland should be given to Irishmen. He did not want an Irishman to hold a single position under the Government of Ireland. The more foreigners they dragged in the better pleased he would be, because in the end the more disgusted the native population would become with the Administration of the country. He wished to put the matter even upon a broader ground. He could not help mentioning the fact that the Liberal rule in Ireland must, to a certain extent, suffer if appointments of this character were to be made. It was for the interest of the farmers of Ireland to have some guarantee of the special fitness of the persons who received appointments upon the Board of Works. He did not offer the smallest opposition to General Sankey individually; but he wanted to know how it was that these extraordinary long-range promotions were made, and that men from Calcutta, Bombay, or Madras could be sent over at any time to fill vacancies in Dublin? He had called attention to the fact that Mr. Clifford Lloyd had been transplanted to Egypt, and that Mr. Blake had been sent out to the Bahamas. No doubt that was because they had good friends in the Public Offices in Ireland; but he wished to strike a blow against the system which brought such persons as Mr. Jenkinson into Ireland. He rejoiced at the importation of foreigners; but he thought they ought to have as few foreigners as possible who had been accustomed to deal with uncivilized races. They knew that Mr. Jenkinson's opinion in regard to the treatment of Ireland was that the natives should be dealt with just in the same manner as the Blacks in India. No doubt the Chief Secretary had had a large Indian experience also, and was inclined to regard the Irish people from the point of view of a member of a superior race. And now they had General Sankey brought over; and he should like to know very much how it was that General Sankey had been appointed? Had he been appointed by the favour of the right hon. Gentleman? Was he a friend of Mr. Jenkinson, or was he a friend of Lord Spencer? Was he known to the Chief Secretary; and how was it that England was so very poor in administrative ability that she had to go this tremendous distance in order to obtain an official? He wished to be clearly understood that it was the system he objected to, and not to the person appointed, and he wished to have a full explanation.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, he had known General Sankey for a good many years. He had the highest opinion of General Sankey, and he rejoiced that so good an officer had been appointed to a post analogous to one which he had held in connection with the public works of Madras. General Sankey was, therefore, quite fitted to fill the appointment for which he had been selected. He believed General Sankey would not disappoint the Irish people, and he was certain that his gallant friend would be the last person to held an office in which he did not give satisfaction.

MR. GIBSON said, he thought it was only fair towards the Government that he should say a few words upon this appointment before the Secretary to the Treasury rose. The observations, however, which he meant to offer in regard to this peculiar appointment of General Sankey were very few. Of course, there was no one who would deny that General Sankey was a gentleman of good ability; and he would assume that he was competent, endowed with a fair capacity, and that he was a man somewhat younger, and of as high a type, as his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (General Sir George Balfour) who had just addressed the House. It was a true estimate of the average opinion which had been formed, and nobody said anything more than that. Irish Members, however, had a right to criticize and challenge an appointment which, on the face of it, was inexplicable. As far as he could hear, General Sankey had never had any connection either with the English or Irish Service at any period of his life. He had never, in the slightest degree, been connected with anything done under the Treasury. He had no knowledge whatever of the way in which Acts of Parliament were administered like those which it would be his duty to administer now in Ireland. As they all knew, the Code which General Sankey would now have to administer in Ireland was a very important one, and must have a great effect upon the well-being and contentment of the people of the country. He, therefore, awaited with some anxiety an explanation from the Government to show what there was in the past career of General Sankey which gave the Irish people a guarantee that he was likely to be successful in the administration he had now been called upon to undertake. It was not a question of General Sankey's character, which was not at all impeached, and there was no question as to the propriety of his conduct. It was not a question as to what his knowledge was as an Artillery or Engineer officer. The real question was, did the circumstances and position of General Sankey show him to be possessed of such remarkable qualifications for administering the special Code which had been passed for Ireland, at a somewhat critical and difficult time, as to require and necessitate his appointment over the heads of others who had spent their lives in that country, and who had special means and knowledge that fitted them for working this great Code? As had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the Irish people wanted to know why General Sankey was brought over from India and placed at the head of a great and important Board like the Board of Works of Ireland? There happened to be already two men of exceptional ability in the Department—Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts. Like most people connected with Ireland, he (Mr. Gibson) was acquainted with those gentlemen. He knew Mr. Le Fanu to be a man of the very highest ability. He was a man who, before he accepted his present post, was at the head of one of the greatest engineering firms in Ireland, and had had to do with the making of some of the principal railways in that country. It was, therefore, considered that the acceptance of the office on his part was a circumstance on which the country was to be congratulated. Only recently a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the working of the Board of Works in Ireland. That Commission was presided over by his noble Friend the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton), and it went very fully into these matters. There might have been some division of opinion as to Colonel M'Kerlie, the late Chairman, although he was, undoubtedly, a hard-working official; but there was none whatever as to the other members of the Board. No one could, or did, question the ability, capacity, and knowledge possessed by Mr. Le Fanu. Then, again, if there was one man in Ireland who, by common consent, was master of the work of his Department, it was Mr. Roberts, who had served in all parts of Ireland in every capacity. They had only to look at him to see that he was a sharp, keen-witted, quick, intelligent man, with his wits all about him, and able to do the work of his Department rapidly and inexpensively. That was said of him by men who had known him all their lives. He did not know the age of Mr. Roberts; but he looked like a man who would never grow old. He was probably about 52 or 53; but he had the appearance of a man who was getting younger every day. Mr. Roberts was a man who had been at work ever since he was 20 years of age; and though he had been engaged in very important public works he had never done a single thing except in the most excellent way. There had never been a complaint against him, and he had commanded the unanimous approval of all those whose approval he had to seek. He was also a man who had steadily kept himself aloof from everything connected with public life and political matters; and he was a man who, as far as he (Mr. Gibson) knew, enjoyed the respect of persons of all shades of politics and of all religious creeds in Ireland. His own acquaintance with Mr. Roberts was not very great; but in the interests of these two men—Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts—the Committee was entitled to know what were the qualifications possessed by General Sankey which had compelled and coerced the Government to pass over these gentlemen.

Colonel COLTHURST said, he concurred with what had been stated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), that there was general surprise in Ireland when Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts were passed over. There was, however, one point upon which he desired information. He wanted to know why, when there was occasion some time ago to create a new Department for the administration of the loans, it had been considered desirable to pass over Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts, both of whom knew Ireland thoroughly, in order to bring over General James, an Engineer officer? He believed General James was in every way a capable man; but his only connection with Ireland was that he had superintended certain temporary relief works. He (Colonel Colthurst) thought that these improvements, and the redistribution of the loans, should have been placed in the hands of someone who had full knowledge of the circumstances, and he was of opinion that the matter was one which required explanation.

Mr. SEXTON remarked, that the conversation which had occurred with regard to the appointment of General Sankey had been to him very edifying. He had heard, with some interest, the observations of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour), who had defended the appointment, and was prepared to give General Sankey a certificate of character and fitness. It was also really a refreshing novelty to hear the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) attacking in that House any Irish official. Many more gross official appointments in Ireland were allowed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and the Party with whom he acted, to pass altogether unnoticed; and, therefore, he welcomed as something quite new the display of vigour they had just witnessed. It was hard to understand why the right hon. and learned Gentleman should have taken upon himself to deliver such an effusive eulogy of Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts, especially when the right hon. and learned Gentleman intimated that he was personally unacquainted with those gentlemen.

Mr. GIBSON said, he had lived in Ireland all his life, and he had known one of the gentlemen in question for many years. He was quite able to speak of their character and ability, although he was not so well acquainted with one of them as with the other.

Mr. SEXTON said, if the House was to judge of these gentlemen by public rumour, all that he could say was that public rumour in Ireland criticized the capacity of the Commissioners of the Board of Works as having been developed and improved by a policy of "muddle and meddle." If the other two Commissioners were such men of capacity and competence as had been described, surely there was no occasion for this sour attack upon General Sankey at the commencement of his career. If Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts were such able men, they might be depended upon to induct General Sankey into the duties of his office. If General Sankey had discharged analogous duties in another country, it was a flimsy objection for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to raise when he said that General Sankey was not acquainted with the clauses and sections of Irish Acts of Parliament. If General Sankey was going to undertake the duties with a determination to perform them with impartiality and vigour the National Party would not find fault with him. He would have a large and well-paid staff of officials under him, and his supposed ignorance of the clauses of an Irish Act of Parliament was altogether outside the question. They had had so many evil-spirited officials appointed in Ireland of late, that he, for one, would be slow to object to the appointment of a man simply because he came from India, if he approached his work with a desire to be impartial, and to discharge his duties with ability and vigour. Colonel M'Kerlie, the predecessor of General Sankey, was an old fossil, and even worse than an old fossil; and, whatever General Sankey might turn out to be hereafter—and he (Mr. Sexton) intended to keep his mind perfectly open in regard to him—it was probably a certain impartiality in the gallant General which had led to this attack; and nothing would have been said to his disparagement if he had been a true blue, thorough-blooded local Orangeman. The sum now asked for the Public Works Office was £10,000, £8,200 of which was asked for under Section 31 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881. It appeared that an excess of £5,400 was occasioned by the employment of 18 additional Inspectors at a salary of £300 each, together with travelling expenses, amounting, in the aggregate, to £2,250. He should be glad if the Secretary to the Treasury, or some of his Colleagues, would state what had been the nature and extent of the operations accomplished by the Board under this clause of the Land Act? So far as he (Mr. Sexton) was aware, they had been of a very slim and unimportant character. When it was proposed to take this Vote, he had given Notice that the House would expect from the hon. Gentleman some details in regard to the operations which had been conducted by the Board in reference to fishing piers and harbours in Ireland. The Royal Commission appointed under the Act had now been for half-a-year at work under the Chairmanship of his hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake). He believed that the Commission had worked with vigour, although some obstacles had been thrown in their way. He should like to have the necessary particulars, and not merely generalities, as to the scheme for providing fishing piers and harbours which had been sanctioned by the Commission; secondly, he should like to know which of the schemes had received the approval of the Board of Works; and, thirdly, at what time it was expected that the schemes would come into actual operation? They were works of great importance, and would provide employment for a large number, besides keeping the people at home; in the next place, the construction of these piers and harbours would supplement the very poor means of employment at present within the reach of the people, especially on the Western Coast of Ireland. He hoped, therefore, that the Committee would be told something practical; and, further, that the schemes were nearly completed, and that the Board of Works were prepared to set to work with the erection of these piers and harbours in Ireland. He must express his surprise that the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) should take so much delight in observing the decrease of the population of Ireland, and in gloating over the fact that it was fast falling off. [Mr. Gibson: No.] The right hon. and learned Gentleman had, at all events, expatiated on the fact that the population of Ireland was now under 5,000,000, basing upon that fact the propriety of decreasing the number of Irish Representatives. He (Mr. Sexton) hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to give the Committee some assurance as to the capacity and ability of General Sankey.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he was very much surprised at the character of the observations of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) in respect to the appointment of General Sankey. When Colonel M'Kerlie's resignation became known it became the duty of the Government to provide a successor to him, and to review the position of the Board of Works, with the view of improving the Board as far as possible. The right hon. and learned Gentleman complained that certain gentlemen had been passed over. Now, he (Mr. Courtney) did not propose to enter into a comparison of the merits of the present second and third Commissioners, and to contrast them with those of the gentleman selected to fill the office of Chairman of the Board. He thought it would be very injudicious to enter into such a comparison, and he was rather surprised that such a suggestion should have been made. The Government were bound to consider the relation of the Board of Works to Irish opinion, as well as the particular merits of the two gentlemen who had been referred to; and they had come to the conclusion that it was most desirable, without, in the slightest degree, desiring to depreciate the merits of Mr. Le Fanu and Mr. Roberts, that the Chief Commissioner should be a person newly brought into the Commission, and that there should be an infusion of fresh blood. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had felt it his duty to ascertain where the most capable man could be found for filling the post of Chairman. The appointment had been made by the Treasury, and the entire responsibility rested upon the Treasury. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in making the appointment, had paid regard to the particular character of the works committed to the Commission. He had paid regard to the fact that analogous works were undertaken by the Department of Works in India. He had also considered the reputation which General Sankey had acquired in the Indian Department of Works; and having measured his merits in comparison with those of the civilians who might have been considered eligible for the position, he had appointed General Sankey as the man who, above all others, appeared to be most fitted to discharge the functions. Something had been said about bringing in an outsider, and the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) intimated that he had no objection to Englishmen or Scotchmen being appointed to posts in Ireland. But anyone who ever heard General Sankey utter two words would discover that he was an Irishman, who, in point of fact, was only now returning to his native country. He had heard that the choice of General Sankey promised to be a great success. General Sankey was an earnest and active officer, diligent in the execution of his work, and it was thought that he would constitute an admirable Chairman of the Board of Works. He (Mr. Courtney) would not dwell upon the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) as to General Sankey's presumed ignorance of the Code of Law with which the Board had to deal. General Sankey would have the assistance of able and intelligent subordinates, and he would be very deficient in intelligence if he found himself unable in a very short time to master the Code of Law which applied to public works in Ireland. As to the observations of the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst), it had been found impossible to allocate the business for which General James had been appointed to any of the existing members of the Board. The organization of the Department would now probably be examined; and he believed that it was not impossible that there might be a great reduction of staff, as well as the infusion of increased energy and efficiency into the Board. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) asked what progress had been made with reference to the advances which had been made under the Land Law (Ireland) Act for loans to occupiers of land? He knew that the Board had been very active in that matter, and had done a fair amount of work. ["Oh!"] It was easy to say "Oh!" but if hon. Members would look at the figures, he thought they would find reason to modify that expression. He believed they would find that the Board of Works had been very active, and that they had done a great deal of work. He had had occasion to discuss this question before with the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), who had complained of the inactivity of the Board, and objected to the small amount of money which happened to have been advanced. He (Mr. Courtney) had pointed out at the time that the comparatively small amount of money advanced was not a test of the work done by the Board. The real test was the number of schemes examined and sanctioned. The amount of the money advanced had been upon the progress of the work done by occupiers. They were paid the money as they did the work. The reason why so small an amount of money had been advanced in comparison with the work sanctioned was that the work actually done was but a very small portion for which advances had been sanctioned. The number of schemes sanctioned under Clause 31, up to the end of January, was 3,519, and the number sanctioned under Clause 19 was 63. The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had pressed upon the Treasury the necessity of exercising great care in regard to the manner in which the Tramways Act was put in motion. The Treasury were much indebted to the hon. Member for the zeal and energy he had displayed; but a study of the Act would show that due precautions had been taken. If the hon. Member would look at the 10th section of the Act, and the 4th sub-section, which referred to the Orders in Council under which these schemes were sanctioned by the Lord Lieutenant before any Order in Council was made, he would see that no scheme was sanctioned unless it was found that the amount of capital was sufficient, and that the authorities were perfectly satisfied as to the *bona fides* of the scheme. Of course, a good deal rested upon the Local Authorities. The Treasury was not the original guarantor at all. The Grand Juries recommended the scheme; the Lord Lieutenant approved of it; and then an Order in Council was issued, and the guarantee of the Treasury was given. He thought the hon. Member for Cavan would see that the provisions of the Act of Parliament were quite sufficient to prevent abuse. There was only one other question to which his attention had been directed, and that was the operations of the Board of Works in connection with the fishing piers and harbours. He thought he had intimated before that there was nothing in these Supplementary Votes which had any reference to the operation of that scheme. In order to make sure, he had made inquiry in regard to this question, and also as to the Barrow drainage, to which reference had been made on a previous occasion, and he found there was nothing in the Vote which applied to them. It would, therefore, be entirely out of Order to enter into a discussion upon those questions, although it would be quite in Order when the Votes in the ordinary Estimates were laid before the House.

Mr. HEALY said, he noticed an item in the Vote of £350 for "excess caused by advertisements in anticipation of legislation, &c." Advertisements of various kinds were constantly issued by the Board of Works; but he was informed that they were supplied to newspapers of one particular shade of politics, and papers which did not circulate among the masses of the people at all. As a matter of fact, the advertisements were given to Orange and Conservative newspapers, which were not read by the people generally, but only by parsons and land agents, while the popular papers were altogether passed over. He should like to have an assurance that General Sankey would exercise impartiality in regard to the distribution of the patronage of the Board of Works, and wherever there was a newspaper—whether it was Orange or connected with the popular Party—if it only circulated a few copies, that newspaper should not be supplied with the public advertisements; but the advertisements should be given to the newspapers which circulated extensively among the people.

Mr. WARTON said, he was very much surprised to find an item in the Vote for an excess caused by advertisements in anticipation of legislation. He confessed that he did not know what the Government meant by advertisements in anticipation of legislation. He thought it was quite enough for the Government, when they got their legislation, to try and carry it out; but not to impose burdens upon the people for advertisements in anticipation of legislation.

Mr. DEASY said, he felt it his duty to bring under the notice of the Committee a matter which he considered to involve neglect on the part of this Department. He had been surprised to hear the Secretary to the Treasury say that the recent appointment of General Sankey to the Chairmanship of the Irish Board of Works had been made in deference to Irish opinion. He would like to know from the hon. Gentleman how he had ascertained the opinion of the Irish people; because he (Mr. Deasy) himself happened to be one of those people who had often troubled the Board of Works with applications, and he must say that great dissatisfaction was expressed at the action of the Board of Works in Ireland. He was afraid that that dissatisfaction would continue to exist, and that the people of Ireland would be actuated by feelings of hostility towards the Irish Department of the Government, so long as the Government placed at the head of important Departments connected with the administration of Irish affairs persons who were brought from India. He thought the Government ought to consult the feelings of the Irish people, and that they ought not to make appointments over the heads of officers long in their employment without consulting those who were responsible for the Government of Ireland. The hon. Gentleman had informed the Committee that the Irish Government were not consulted in regard to the appointment of General Sankey, but that it had been made in London. He (Mr. Deasy) hoped that state of things would not continue; and he must tell the Committee that his experience as a farmer in the South of Ireland went to show that if it did continue very little improvement would be carried out under the administration of the Board of Works. The answer he had received to a Question he had put that night was erroneous in many respects.

Mr. COURTNEY rose to Order. He thought the hon. Member was entering into the question of harbours, which had nothing to do with the present Vote.

Mr. DEASY said, he only wanted to show that the heads of the Public Works Department in Ireland were incapable of carrying out their duties.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that it would be altogether irregular to enter into the question of the action of the Board of Works in reference to Kinsale Harbour. It had nothing whatever to do with the Vote now under discussion, which was simply an Estimate for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Public Works.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was astounded at the statement made by the Secretary to the Treasury. The Committee were asked to supplement a Vote for a certain Public Department. The administration of that Department was impugned, and they were told by the Secretary to the Treasury that they were not allowed to discuss that administration. He wished to call attention to the fact that there was a sum in the Vote of £1,100 for salaries, and there were also separate sums for travelling and incidental expenses.

MR. WARTON said, he could see nothing in the way in which the Estimate was drawn which excluded a discussion upon piers and harbours.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF wished to point out that when he had made a statement in regard to Mr. Errington's expenses he was told that it would be quite legitimate to discuss it when the Foreign Office Vote was brought up. He certainly thought that the Secretary to the Treasury had better go into the Chair himself. The hon. Gentleman had often done so without waiting to be asked; and why did he not do so that night? He wished to know from the Chairman whether, when the Committee were discussing a Vote for any Department, they were not at liberty to criticize all the minor details of that Department?

THE CHAIRMAN: No doubt the way in which this Vote is submitted to the Committee opens up very large questions. The Vote is for the Office of Public Works in Ireland; and I am not prepared to say, if it is the intention of any hon. Member to impugn the conduct of any official in the Office of Public Works in Ireland, that it will be out of Order to do so. At the same time, I think if the conduct of any official is to be impugned it should be impugned directly in reference to some item in the Estimate before the Committee.

MR. DEASY said, his object was to show the incapacity of the heads of the Department of the Board of Works; and he was not at all surprised, judging from what had taken place, that the Secretary to the Treasury should not desire to have that question raised. This was his (Mr. Deasy's) first attempt to speak in that House, and he was not astonished at the treatment he had received. It would have been more surprising to him if he had been treated in any other way. The Secretary to the Treasury had been informed by the head of the Public Works Department that the people of Kinsale had selected a site for Kinsale Harbour, and that it was a fit and proper site for the purpose intended. Now, he (Mr. Deasy) would inform the hon. Gentleman that, as far back as the year 1874, the people of Kinsale assembled at a public meeting and selected a totally different site. The Harbour Commissioners approved of the site so selected, and made an application in reference to it to the heads of the Board of Public Works. All the preliminaries were arranged; but a new Harbour Board came into office, many members of which were directly interested in changing the site of the pier; several others had property on the site now proposed, who, being directly interested in the town of Bandon, as against Kinsale, desired that the trade and commerce of the port should go to Bandon, instead of stopping at Kinsale. An application was made to the Board of Works for a grant previous to the making of the new Harbour Board. The grant was given; but, from some unexplained reason, the heads of the Department changed their minds, and, without consulting the wishes of the people of Kinsale at all, ordered the pier to be built on its present site—they were probably influenced by the new Harbour Commissioners who came into office in the meantime. He was told that the pier was dry at low water, and that it was altogether valueless. It was built upon a foundation of about three feet, and 25 feet of mud. The other day an inquiry at Kinsale was instituted by the heads of the Department in Dublin, and the Harbour Master and others were examined in order to astertain if the pier was at all suited for the purpose for which it was intended, and if it would be of the slightest advantage. It was sworn at the inquiry that the town of Kinsale would have to expend something like £100,000 in dredging in order to render it of use. He believed that if the dredging were carried on as proposed the pier would tumble down within a week. That being so, he wished to know from the hon. Gentleman whether he considered that these persons were capable of discharging their duties efficiently; and he further asked the hon. Gentleman to say that he would suspend the further progress of the work until he was able to obtain the opinion of a competent engineer as to the advisability of altering the present site? He had been told by the Secretary of the Board of Works that the contribution made by the Local Board at Kinsale was for the sum of £2,000; but the Secretary must have made a mistake in his figures, because the contribution made by the Commissioners at Kinsale was for £3,000. The latest instance of the incapacity of the Board had been brought under his notice that day. He had received a communication from one of his own constituents, informing him that last Tuesday, at a Petty Sessions near the City of Cork, there was a suit against a farmer named Sullivan, by the Cork Board of Guardians, for not having erected labourers' cottages.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now extending his observations into details which would be more properly discussed when the regular Votes come on.

MR. HEALY asked if his hon. Friend would not be in Order if he moved to reduce that part of the Vote which related to salaries by the sum of £100?

MR. COURTNEY said, there was nothing in this Vote for the salaries of officers in this Department.

MR. GORST desired to point out that these Supplementary Estimates were rendered necessary by the increased work of the Department. He submitted, therefore, that it was perfectly in Order for hon. Members to discuss the nature of the increased work. If the work of the Department was bad, it was not desirable that the Committee should intrust them with more funds.

MR. DEASY said, as he understood he was in Order he would proceed. He did not give these particulars for the purpose of enlightening the people of Ireland, who were only too well acquainted with the manner in which the Board of Public Works did their business, but for the purpose of enlightening the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Secretary to the Treasury. In this case the man was fined £54 for neglecting to complete the work. It was clearly proved that it was owing to the delay on the part of the Board that he had been unable to go on with the erection of the work. The man having no money, he made application to the Board of Works; a great deal of time was consumed by correspondence, and up to the present he had not received a single shilling. He could multiply instances of this kind; but he would simply express a hope that the hon. Gentleman would give an undertaking to the Committee that the matter relating to the Kinsale Pier and Quay should be investigated. He trusted, also, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would make himself more conversant with the working of this Department, of which he was the head, and that Irish Members would no longer have cause to complain of gross neglect on the part of the Board of Public Works in Ireland. In case of need he should be prepared, if in Order, to give, on a future occasion, many more particulars than those to which he had asked the attention of the hon. Gentleman. With regard to General Sankey, his appointment had been sufficient to shake whatever confidence the people had in the Board of Public Works. This had always been very small; but the people of Ireland had now absolutely no confidence in the administration of any Act of Parliament intrusted to that Board.

MR. EUGENE COLLINS regretted that he had not been present when the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy) commenced his speech. Having lived in Kinsale for many years, he thought that perhaps he knew more about this question than the hon. Member. For the information of the Committee, and to put the matter in its true light, he might be allowed to say that the construction of the pier for the improvement of the Harbour of Kinsale had been under the consideration of the Local Authorities for a period of 15 years; that the subject had been discussed in every shape and form; that the Local Bodies, the Harbour Board, and the Town Commissioners approved the scheme; that patient inquiries had been made by the Board of Works on the spot; and that the decision arrived at was approved both by the Harbour Board and the Town Commissioners; and that the selection of the site on which the pier was erected was confirmed by the general opinion of those Bodies, which were composed of men elected by the ratepayers.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member was travelling beyond the Question before the Committee in entering into details which would properly be referred to another Vote, MR. EUGENE COLLINS said, he had felt himself bound to contradict the statements of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy). He thought he ought not to allow those misstatements to be published without making some explanation in justification of the authorities at Kinsale.

MR. BLAKE said, he thought the hon. Member for Kinsale could hardly be aware of what had been shown at the inquiry held within the last few days by two of his (Mr. Blake's) Colleagues on the Harbour Commission at Kinsale, and that was that the proposed works would afford insufficient accommodation. [MR. EUGENE COLLINS: I know perfectly well what is going on.] A very strong representation had been made by certain parties in Kinsale in the exact direction indicated by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. The allegation was that the proposed harbour was insufficient for the purposes of the fishing vessels frequenting the locality. He had to refer also to an observation with reference to a statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who had said that since the appointment of General Sankey the Board of Works had lost the confidence of the public. He (Mr. Blake) had come into official contact with that gentleman in connection with an important Commission that he was endeavouring to carry out. He could say, as the result of his experience, that no better officer could have been appointed to the position which General Sankey now occupied. No one could be more anxious to forward every work of utility in Ireland that came within his province; his zeal in that respect was extraordinary. He (Mr. Blake) had no personal interest in this question; his acquaintance with General Sankey was very slight, indeed; he had only met him officially; he simply felt himself bound, in justice to him as a public officer, to say that no appointment had been made for years in Ireland which reflected so much credit on the Treasury as the appointment of General Sankey, who was an officer of the highest ability, and had earned great distinction in a nearly similar position in India, where he (Mr. Blake) had heard him spoken of in the very highest terms. He was perfectly sure the hon. Member would be the last man to make a misleading statement, and that he would, after he became better acquainted with General Sankey's merits, and especially his capacity and desire to do good service to Ireland, take another view of the matter.

MR. KENNY asked what steps were being taken to break up the Shannon trusts, and to vest the control of the harbours from Limerick to the sea in Local Bodies?

MR. COURTNEY said, they had the greatest difficulty in carrying out their design owing to the necessity of creating Bodies in which to vest those harbours. There were no Bodies to be found on the spot, and in one instance he feared they would be driven to place the harbour under a neighbouring landlord.

MR. KENNY said, Ireland would be astonished to hear that it was impossible to get a sufficient number of intelligent local men to manage those harbours better than at present.

MR. COURTNEY, on the subject of advertising, denied that political motives actuated the Department, but promised to communicate with General Sankey.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN urged that steps should be taken to protect the lands adjacent to the Shannon, which were sometimes flooded to an extent that rendered cultivation impossible.

MR. MAYNE said, that the Secretary to the Treasury had implied that the advertisements of the Board of Works were distributed wholly irrespective of the political views of newspapers. Whether that were so or not he (Mr. Mayne) was not aware; but an opinion was general in Dublin that, quite apart from the question of politics, there was an almost entire absence of advertisements in connection with any public works in that city. The result of that was that something very like jobbery had crept in, and that the patronage dispensed in connection with public works in Dublin was very largely influenced by political motives to the detriment of the public interest. Prices were paid for wood and other materials which would not be paid if the works were laid open by advertisement to public competition, and abuses even of a more serious kind were very generally stated to exist in Dublin in connection with the contracts of the Board of Public Works. He had heard a statement to the effect that some of the floors in Dublin Castle had been covered three times over with floor-cloth by one of the contractors to the Department, and all at the same time. That state of things would be put an end to if the work at Dublin Castle, and in other parts of the City, were submitted to public competition. He was sure that the work would then be done at a less expense, and that these scandalous statements would no longer have any existence or foundation. He put it to the hon. Gentleman that General Sankey might bring about a useful reform in this respect; and he would suggest that every contract of above £50 should be advertised, say, in the newspapers, and that the firm tendering to give the best value should receive the contract. The adoption of that course would, in his opinion, secure both expedition and economy.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he was very glad to hear from the Secretary to the Treasury that it was intended to scrutinize very carefully the schemes with regard to tramways in Ireland, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the plundering of the public. As an instance of the way these things were managed, he might remark that it was alleged, as a proof of the rising character of a town in connection with which a railway was proposed that would cost several millions sterling, that during the previous 10 years 10 new houses had been built there. That was the kind of argument used in favour of Irish tramways and railways. With regard to loans under the 31st section of the Land Act for improvements in land, he did not know whether his hon. Friends agreed with him; but he always looked upon these applications for loans with suspicion. He believed that, in many cases, a large amount of the money obtained was not spent in improvements at all; that improper representations were made to the Inspectors; and it was to be hoped, the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury having been drawn to the subject, that he would, as far as possible, take care that these loans should be kept within reasonable limits. The hon. Gentleman knew very well that if these advances were not made on good security, application would have to be made to the Treasury to wipe off the debts. This, from every point of view, was most undesirable; and the hon. Gentleman, by taking the matter in hand, would do something not only in the interest of the British ratepayer, but satisfactory to the Irish people.

Vote *agreed to.*

Class III.—Law and Justice.

(2.) £425, Chancery Division and Supreme Court Generally.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Attorney General whether arrangements had been made to relieve the block which had existed since last year in the Court of Chancery? It would be satisfactory to the Committee to know if any successful attempt had been made to meet the pressure of business.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that a large number of cases had been transferred to the Queen's Bench Division from the Court of Chancery. The only other relief that could be given would be to exempt the Judges of the Chancery Division from going on Circuit. This was now under consideration, as was also a proposal to send only one Judge instead of two into the smaller counties. All the Judges would be put into the Commission, so that they could be utilized as required in the different Circuits.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £985, Central Office of the Supreme Court of Judicature.

Mr. WARTON pointed out that the numbers of the Judges and clerks provided for in the Vote was not stated. He had frequently complained of the way some of the Estimates were made up. The entire absence of details made it impossible to arrive at a proper judgment on the Vote. It would be no answer to say that details were never given in these cases, because some of the Votes contained just the details that were absent from this Estimate. He trusted the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to supply the information desired, and that he would have the Estimate presented in a more intelligible form in future.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he objected altogether to this Vote. How was it that this additional sum of £985 was asked for Travelling Expenses? The whole Vote, in 1881-2, was only £4,800, and in 1882-3 £4,800. This increased expenditure not only required explanation, but justification. The hon. and learned Attorney General had alluded, on the last Vote, to the anomaly of the Chancery Judges going on Circuit; but he (Mr. Fowler) ventured to think that if the Secretary to the Treasury gave the Committee the details of this Vote, it would be found that the charge arose from a much greater evil, which inflicted a serious wrong on suitors in the Supreme Court — namely, the Lords Justices of Appeal going on Circuit. Those Judges were sent about the country for the purpose of trying persons for trifling offences which could be disposed of at the ordinary Quarter Sessions, a practice which he regarded as the greatest waste of judicial power of which a civilized country could be guilty. The present Vote offered one of the very few opportunities which presented themselves for discussing questions of this kind; and he availed himself of it to ask the Attorney General to say whether there was any likelihood of a stop being put to the custom of sending the Lords Justices of Appeal about the country to try Quarter Sessions cases?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he hoped the time had come when the Government would not only consider the waste of judicial power involved by the Lords Justices of Appeal having to try Quarter Sessions cases, but that also occasioned by sending any Judges at all to try cases of the kind. He thought the Committee were entitled to some declaration of intention on the part of the Government as to whether they considered that it was a proper use of the judicial force of the country that cases which could be tried at Quarter Sessions should be allowed to consume the time of the Judges of the land.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he endorsed all that had fallen from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) with regard to the great inconvenience consequent upon the Lords Justices of Appeal going on Circuit. He (Mr. Grantham) went farther, and said that similar inconvenience resulted from the absence on Circuit of the Judges of the Court of Chancery, who were often called upon to try cases with which they were in no way familiar; and the result of it was that the time of the suitors was wasted, and great expense incurred by the country, in prolonged attendance at Assizes. Certainly, he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to put a stop to this practice, especially when it was known that the only reason for this anomaly was their desire to put the Judges on an equality as to expenses incurred in going Circuit; or, in other words, because the Common Law Judges had to pay £500 a-year for Circuit expenses, it was admittedly unfair that Chancery Judges should receive the same salary as Common Law Judges, and yet not be liable to any similar reduction; and, therefore, instead of paying the expenses of the Common Law Judges, the Government preferred to send Judges unfitted for their work on Circuit, in order to make them pay lodging expenses and railway fares to the amount of £800 a-year—a most wretched economy, and only worthy of a Liberal Administration.

MR. WADDY said, he hoped they would succeed in getting some expression of opinion with regard to this serious matter. It was hoped that it would be a good thing to have one Court instead of the old-fashioned Courts, which were numerous; it was thought that in time the new arrangements would work smoothly and harmoniously. The result, however, had been that pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham). The expenses of going Circuit amounted to something like £500 a-year, and Judges had been compelled to pay them out of their own pocket; because it was felt that the official and judicial position of the Judges required them to undertake certain expenses. As it was a grossly unfair thing to fine certain Judges £500 out of a salary of £5,000, or, in other words, to reduce their salary to £4,500, it was thought the only way to protest was not to pay the expenses. He hoped that the time was coming when this matter would be looked at in a fair and reasonable way. The Chancery Judges did Chancery work well; but they themselves would admit they did not do as well work to which they had not been accustomed.

MR. CROPPER desired to say a few words in support of the position taken up by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). He came from a county in which they had as often as not to give the Judge a pair of white gloves. It was felt to be very troublesome, and to be a great waste of time by the common jurors and others, to assemble time after time in the county town to go through the same ceremony. It seemed, moreover, a great pity that the whole retinue of the Judges should be brought down in order that the ceremony he had mentioned should be performed. He agreed with some of the hon. Gentlemen who had preceded him that many of the cases now tried at Assizes might with advantage be tried at Quarter Sessions; and he earnestly hoped that this opportunity would not be lost in pressing on the Government the desirability of initiating some reforms in the direction indicated.

Mr. RAMSAY said, that, before the Attorney General replied to the questions which had been addressed to him by so many hon. Members, he would suggest that one means of relieving these learned Gentlemen from some of their duties was that the Government should at an early date, by means of legislation, prevent the possibility of English Judges interfering with the jurisdiction of Scottish Courts. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen might think it was a matter for amusement that a Scottish Representative should make a complaint; but he assured them it was no matter of jest in Scotland that the Supreme Courts should have come so much into conflict as they had done on a recent occasion; and he thought it right to submit that the people of Scotland should not be trifled with in this fashion. They had got on for 150 years without conflict between the Courts of England and Scotland; and it was not till within the last few years that the Supreme Court of Judicature had interfered with the Scottish Courts. He wished to bring under the notice of the Government the fact that unless something were done to prevent conflict of jurisdiction, or to prevent the English Courts interfering in any way with Scotchmen in cases affecting themselves in Scotland, it would be a very serious matter, and would be viewed as such by the people of his country. The Union, which was framed upon the supposition that it was to exclude the interference of the English Courts in Scottish cases, had been violated to a decided extent by certain decisions which had been given in the Court of Chancery and elsewhere on recent occasions.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) agreed with a great deal that had fallen from hon. Members, and he sincerely wished he could make a statement that would be more satisfactory to the Committee than he feared he could make. It was impossible to make any announcement as to the intentions of the Government in this matter. He might say, however, that the Lord Chancellor had asked for the assistance of certain Judges, with the view of arriving at some practical remedy for the evils which they all knew existed. He must point out that this was not a question on which the Government could act exactly as they wished in order that the block in the business of the Courts might be removed, or that certain Judges would not need to go Circuit. Directly any step was taken to prevent any unnecessary expenditure in judicial strength opposition to such action exhibited itself; and the Government were told that it was very advisable that justice should be administered in the different counties, because it was well the people should be instructed in the manner in which justice should be administered. Directly there was a suggestion that there should be any such economy in judicial time, even the smallest Assize town, where, perhaps, no substantial business was done, found reason to make protests against any alteration of the system of holding Assizes. He was sure there were many hon. Members who were conscious of the objection their constituents had to the removal of certain Assize business. All these questions must be considered. He did not mean to say they all ought to prevail; but it was wise to take the assistance of everyone to see that no towns were passed over unduly. Undoubtedly, the observations made in the House would be of great use, inasmuch as it showed what might be the opinion outside the House as to planning some system whereby judicial strength should not be thrown away, but that it should only be brought to bear where it was absolutely required. He could assure the Committee that those who had the consideration of this matter in hand were fully alive to the necessity of reserving the Judges of the Supreme Court within their own sphere. The fact was admitted on all sides that it was a great evil that Appellate Judges should have to leave London to go Circuit; and he fully recognized the great importance in the administration of criminal justice of having men to try the cases who had had some experience in criminal cases. He wished he could say more than that the matter was under the consideration of the Judges. Of course, it was necessary to listen to every view and every suggestion; but he would not fail to report what had occurred that night to the Lord Chancellor.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, there was one question he had to ask with regard to this Vote. He had always understood that the Judges paid their own travelling expenses when on Circuit——

MR. COURTNEY: The old Circuits—not the new.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked what was the meaning of the charge of £985?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that two new Circuits had been formed; and it was felt that when they increased the number of Circuits they could not reasonably expect the Judges to pay the expense of going the new Circuits.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he did not think the Committee really understood the question of the expenses of Judges. It was generally believed that the money Judges expended was spent in defraying their own personal expenses; but that was not so, for the £500 a-year which it cost them included judicial dinners given to the magistrates and to the Bar, in almost every town they went to, besides the expenses of a retinue of clerks and servants. If the public were aware of the facts he was persuaded they would see reason why Judges should not be called upon to pay the expenses of going Circuit.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY quite understood the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry James) was not in a position to make any binding announcement; but his reply did not cover the point which he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) raised just now—namely, the question relating to the trial of criminal cases.

MR. WADDY said, the point which he had raised was purely one of money, and the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Justices could hardly make a recommendation upon it. The Motion must come from the House; in point of fact from the Government.

MR. WARTON said, he saw great force in what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) had said. There was too much legislation by Judges. It was scandalous that legislation should be hurried through the House as it was last Session, and that power should be given, after only a few hours' discussion, to Judges to make momentous changes in the Rules and Orders of the Courts. He hoped there would be no more Committees of Judges. He was sure the Attorney General wished to do all he could in the interest of the Profession; but he was afraid it was the Secretary to the Treasury who drew the purse strings too tightly in matters of great importance. The administration of justice was of the highest importance, and if one or two Judges more were required they ought to be supplied. The Secretary to the Treasury, however, put the Attorney General in the humiliating position of making an insufficient number of Judges do the work. The evil was getting worse and worse; and until the fact was recognized by the Treasury that more Judges were required no alteration of the Circuits would be of the slightest avail. He had to complain of that absurd alteration brought in by the Judicature Acts, by which an attempt was made to join things which were perfectly distinct. Now and then there would be a few men, like Lord Westbury, who would be able to understand Equity Law as well as Common Law. For years, and even now, there was the scandal of sending Equity Judges to try criminal cases. It would not be decent for him to name particular Judges, and he would not do so; but he maintained that most scandalous miscarriages of justice had taken place in consequence of Equity Judges being sent down to try criminal cases. He knew nothing more unseemly than that a man should be tried for murder, for instance, by a man who had had nothing to do with criminal cases; it was a barbarous idea. He hoped there would be a thorough abandonment of the ridiculous idea that Equity Law and Common Law could be administered by one man. Absurd changes had been carried by the ignorance of the supporters of the Government, who knew nothing about the questions upon which they voted. It was shocking that because there was now an ignorant majority behind the Government sacred old principles should be destroyed, and grand old institutions torn up by the roots.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he would not say more, in respect to what the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) had just said, than that the great change represented by the fusion of Law and Equity was not made by this terrible Ministry and supported by the present servile majority, but was made by hon. Gentlemen who now sat on the Opposition side of the House. He, however, rose chiefly to say a few words in reply to what his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Ramsay) had stated about the conflict between the Scottish and English Courts. His hon. Friend had alluded, no doubt, to a well-known case decided recently in the House of Lords, and which seemed likely to come up for decision there again. Of course, it would not be right for him to make any allusion to that case, because it was now on its way to the House of Lords; but he was sure his hon. Friend would be glad to know that Rules had recently been made which limited very much the cases in which it was possible to sue in England a person resident in Scotland; and he would also be glad to know that those Rules met many of the cases to which attention had been called and exception taken lately. He would further be rejoiced to know that only yesterday the Court of Appeal, in a particular case, overruling a decision of the Divisional Court, decided that a Scotchman out of the jurisdiction ought not to be served with a writ by the English Courts, and that the litigation ought to be conducted in Scotland. That was a decision given only yesterday in the Court of Appeal under the new Rules; and he thought his hon. Friend would find that those new Rules would meet most of the evils of which there had been just cause for complaint.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it must be very puzzling to anyone not acquainted with the House to arrive at any distinct opinion with regard to the Rules and Orders which regulated their discussions. When he left the House some time ago an hon. Member had been called to Order because, in discussing a general Vote in aid of Public Works in Ireland, he was proceeding to comment upon the administration of that Department; and yet he found that an hon. and learned Gentleman, speaking on behalf of the Government, could discuss, under a Vote for the Travelling Expenses of Judges and Clerks in England, the difference between the judicial finding in Scotland and that in England. That appeared to him to be travelling very far afield from the Vote; perhaps that was the only connection with the item of travelling which could be established. He would not follow the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) into the discussion on the wisdom of the fusion, or what was called the fusion, of Law and Equity under the Judicature Act of 1875, or upon the advisability of making use of Equity Judges for the trial of criminal cases. But with regard to the subject-matter of this particular Vote, it was perfectly well known—it was an open secret—that the reason why there was so much difficulty in getting Judges to go Circuit was that they were put to pecuniary expense which, if they did not go Circuit, they would not be put to. Under those circumstances, it did seem extraordinary that, while they voted, and voted without any difficulty or opposition, £10,000, £20,000, and £30,000 for such stupid things as Royal Yachts, which no one saw, except the officers who drew their pay half-yearly for serving upon them, they should refuse £5,000 or £10,000 for an extra Judge or two to get rid of the scandalous arrears in the Courts of Justice, by which the whole body of the public were injured, and suitors were put to all sorts of unnecessary expense and perfectly unjustifiable delay. It did seem to him that, instead of coming for a miserable £985 on account of Travelling Expenses of Judges and Clerks, while the people's business in the Courts of Justice was so scandalously delayed, it would be more worthy of a great and civilized Government to come forward and say—"The great object of Government is to secure justice between man and man; and therefore we propose a very much larger Vote on account of the Supreme Court of Judicature than we have submitted to Parliament before." If that were done, he was perfectly certain that House would not hesitate to vote, if needs be, another £100,000 for the purpose of such a service.

MR. RAMSAY merely rose to say, with reference to the remarks of the hon.

and learned Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell), that no arrangement of the kind that he had indicated—an amending of the Rules framed by Judges of the English Court—would be satisfactory to the people of Scotland. They were entitled to protection against the intrusion of English jurisdiction into Scotch Courts, and it was that of which they had just cause to complain. He felt it was necessary that he should say this, for the purpose of preventing the idea that any arrangement of the kind the Solicitor General had indicated would settle the matter in a satisfactory way. It should be put beyond the power of the English Judges to sanction the interference of any English Court in a Scotch case.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) £9,916, County Courts.

MR. WARTON said, he had no intention to criticize the Vote in detail, because, after all, the sum wanted was not a very large one. What, however, he wanted to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) was, whether it was the fact that, for some time past, there had been the tendency rather to diminish the number of County Court Judges? If that be the case, how was it that the expenditure in respect of County Courts was increasing and not diminishing?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked, whether the increase in the expenditure on County Courts was in any part due to the operation of the new Bankruptcy Act?

MR. COURTNEY: No; in the year which is now expiring the expenditure is rather less.

MR. WARTON said, he hoped the hon. and learned Attorney General would answer the question he (Mr. Warton) had put to him—namely, whether, by a re-arrangement of Circuits, there had not been a decrease in the number of Judges?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was not aware that there had been any re-arrangement of Circuits. He knew it was contemplated to do away with one or two if the opportunity was afforded. Of course, they must wait for the opportunity before they could effect any re-arrangement.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £5,100, Police — Counties and Boroughs (Great Britain).

(6.) £100, Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies.

(7.) £4,700, Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).

MR. GIBSON asked if the Secretary to the Treasury was in a position to tell the Committee if anything was likely to result from the recent labours of the Industrial and Reformatory Schools Commission?

MR. HIBBERT said, that perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman would allow him to answer the question. The Report of the Commission had been received, and had been issued to both Houses of Parliament. The Home Secretary had sent copies of the Report to the Departments which would be affected by it—namely, the Education Department, the Local Government Board, and the Treasury, and he had asked for their observations upon it. As soon as the replies were received his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary would consider in what way action should be taken to carry out the recommendations of the Commission which were contained in their Report. He ought to add that the work of the Commission had been most ably conducted, and that he hoped their labours would result in great advantage to the classes affected. A copy of the Report had also been sent to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland's Department, and to Scotland.

EARL PERCY asked if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) could inform the Committee what was the cause of the continual increase in the number of children sent to the schools in question?

MR. HIBBERT said, the increase of children had been much greater than was anticipated when the Estimates were framed. The number in the present year had increased from 11,197 to 12,160; and it was owing to this great increase that this Supplementary sum was required. The Department were not aware of the cause of the increase, except that Industrial Schools were made use of more liberally than formerly. He believed that when the cause came to be ascertained it would be found that the whole subject required serious consideration.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY reminded the Committee of the flourish of trumpets with which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary announced what he was going to do with regard to juvenile offenders, when he first succeeded to Office. As a matter of fact, very little was done until a great scandal occurred in regard to one particular school. Had it not been for the disclosures connected with the school to which he alluded, they would not have had this Royal Commission, the Report of which they had been waiting for previous to legislating with regard to juvenile offenders. Could the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) say whether the increase in the number of children was due to the operation of the little Act—the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act—which was passed, he thought, in 1880, and which brought in a fresh class of children? It was estimated at the time the Act was passed that it would increase very largely the number of children admitted to the schools.

Mr. HIBBERT was not able to say whether the increase was due to the operation of the Act to which the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) referred; but the whole of the increase was in respect of English Industrial Schools; it had nothing to do with Reformatory Schools at all.

Earl PERCY said, he thought the Act to which his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) alluded did refer to Industrial Schools. It affected children belonging to a certain class, whose sad condition had been the cause of great anxiety, and it was found at one time extremely difficult to induce magistrates to send children to Industrial Schools. It would be exceedingly interesting to know whether there had been any change in the disposition of magistrates to send children to Industrial Schools.

Mr. HIBBERT said, a great part of the increase was due to the new system affecting Industrial Schools which had been introduced in recent years. He would gladly make further inquiry and to confer with the noble Earl.

Mr. HINDE PALMER said, that one of the most valuable parts of the Report of the Royal Commission was that which referred to the elementary education of the children in Industrial and Reformatory Schools. It was not sufficient to give the children an industrial education; they required an education such as was given in elementary schools. He was glad to hear from his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) that the Government meant to take the Report of the Commission in hand in earnest, and that it was not to be put where a great number of Blue Books were put—out of thought and out of sight.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR inquired how many Industrial Schools there were?

Mr. HIBBERT said, there were 12 Industrial Schools in England.

Mr. WARTON said, he thought that when the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) went fully into the question he would find that the Act to which the hon. and learned Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) referred did not account for a tenth part of the increase in the number of children sent to Industrial Schools. In the present day there was a great deal of fanaticism about education, and he (Mr. Warton) was inclined to attribute the increase to education. He rose chiefly, however, to point out that the law, as it at present stood, worked great hardship and wrong. For instance, a child could not be admitted into a Reformatory School unless he had undergone a term of imprisonment. He put it to this wise and philanthropic Ministry whether they could not so alter the law that children who had committed some trivial offence could not be sent to a Reformatory School without their being first of all degraded by being sent to prison?

Mr. HIBBERT said, the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman had been considered by the Royal Commission, and one of their recommendations was very much upon the lines the hon. and learned Gentleman had taken up.

Vote *agreed to.*

(8.) £730, Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.

Mr. RAMSAY pointed out the necessity of securing greater economy in the management of this asylum. The expense of it was very great, and frequently attention had been called to the matter in Parliament. It was said that the present increased expenditure arose from natural causes—that it was owing to the increase of the number of patients retained in the asylum. It was estimated that there would be 515 patients;

whereas the daily average number actually maintained was 530. The charge was £27,450, so that about £50 was taken for each criminal. He hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) would take the matter into consideration; because he was persuaded that, if the hon. Gentleman compared Broadmoor with Perth, he would find he could secure greater economy with great advantage to the patients and to the public.

MR. GIBSON noticed that the victualling for patients and attendants cost £9,745. That accounted for £18 5*s.* per inmate. In addition, there was the cost of clothing for the patients—£1,120—but that was only a very small sum out of the total. He would like to know what it was that the Government calculated was the expense of each inmate in the asylum? The estimate of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ramsay) seemed a very high one, and he (Mr. Gibson) would like to know whether it was correct?

MR. HIBBERT said, he was sorry to say the average cost was very high in the Broadmoor Asylum—he believed it was about £45 per head. Attention had been drawn to the great cost of the inmates; it had been noticed in the House, and great attention had been paid to the subject by the Department. One ought, in justice to the Managers of Broadmoor Asylum, say that, for many years past, they had been reducing the cost. Of course, it might be still very much in excess of what the cost of criminal lunatics was in Scotland. ["Or Ireland!"] Or Ireland. At the same time, one was obliged to note the fact that this class of dangerous lunatics required a great deal of attention.

MR. GIBSON: They are not necessarily dangerous.

MR. HIBBERT said, a great many of them were dangerous—they were all criminals, and he knew many of them were dangerous. The increased cost was owing to the increase of 15 inmates upon the number who were estimated for when the original Estimates were sent in. The charge in respect of those inmates was £470. The remainder of the money now asked for was to go towards the repair of a wall which was destroyed in the recent gale. He must say also, in justice to the Council of Suspervision, that they had not for 10 years past come to Parliament for a Supplementary Vote of any kind.

MR. RAMSAY said, the cause of the great expense of criminal lunatics was not that they were dangerous. The class who were the greatest expense were those inmates who were not lunatics at all, but who in a fit of *delirium tremens* committed a crime. They were confined as lunatics, although now they might be perfectly sane. He believed there were none of the inmates who were so difficult to manage as that class.

MR. WARTON said, he did not quite understand how it was the average cost per head was only £45. If the Committee would take the trouble to divide £27,450 by 530 they would find that the cost was £51 per head.

MR. HIBBERT: It is £45 per head, exclusive of buildings.

Vote *agreed to.*

(9.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £15,090, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, of Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 & 16 Vic. c. 83."

MR. O'BRIEN said, he thought it would be well if the Committee were informed whether this Vote included a sum of an analogous character to a sum referred to in the Report of the Auditor General. The Auditor General, under Sub-head E of his Report, showed that £1,087 16*s.* had been paid to Counsel and Law Officers in respect of the action brought by *United Ireland* against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster). "These expenses," the Auditor General reported—

"Are very similar in character to those incurred in 1873 in defending the Government in connection with the Phœnix Park riots, which expenses were shown under a separate sub-head. It would seem desirable where very heavy expenses are incurred for purposes of defence the course adopted in 1873 should be followed."

He (Mr. O'Brien) thought it would be desirable to know whether there was any sum of a similar character proposed to be included in this Vote? If so, it would be objectionable, not only because it was not set out as a sub-head, but also because of the enormous disproportion of the costs to the work done. The charge of £1,087 appeared to him most extraordinary. The trials in reference to the riots in the Phœnix Park were very prolonged and very expensive. The action brought by the proprietor of *United Ireland* never went beyond the initiatory stage. The writ was served, and he believed the statement of defence was delivered, but no motion was made, no witnesses were summoned. The case never came for trial; therefore, it was of a totally different character to the case of the Phœnix Park riots. The action was brought at the time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) was in the zenith of his coercive power in Ireland. The police were in the habit of pilfering copies of the paper and hunting the editors from city to city. The action was brought; but before any proceedings could be taken the right hon. Gentleman had come to grief. No doubt both sides were glad of the truce; at all events, *United Ireland* dropped the action. But he desired to know how this £1,000 could possibly have been expended? The right hon. Gentleman in seizing the newspapers no doubt acted on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown; but they were paid in the ordinary way for such advice as that; indeed, he found that in that very year the Attorney General for Ireland received something like £8,000 for work done. He could have had no work in connection with the *United Ireland* action that he (Mr. O'Brien) could imagine which would entitle him to receive anything like £1,000. It would be well that they should know whether the costs of any other prosecution were included in the Vote, more especially as *United Ireland* was not yet in smooth waters with the Government—*United Ireland* was still in litigation. He would not refer to the nature of the litigation, though it was such in regard to which the Government could scarcely be considered altogether indifferent. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) would say whether the public money under this Vote could be utilized in respect of the litigation to which he referred?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that the Vote related to the trial of persons for murder, and was largely due to changes of venue. It did not include any sum whatever in reference to the matter spoken of by the hon. Member.

MR. O'BRIEN asked if the hon. and learned Gentleman had no information to give as to the action brought by *United Ireland?*—£1,000 seemed a large sum to pay in respect of proceedings which never came before a Court.

MR. HEALY said, they could make all excuse for the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Walker), because he was not in Office at the time the proceedings in question were taken. It was, however, very desirable that these figures should be set out in sub-heads. He could not understand how any hon. Gentlemen could pass an enormous Estimate of £10,000 without a single word of explanation. How was it that any auditor could pass unspecified and unitemized such a large amount?—£1,000 was an absurdly large sum to give for advice in an action which never came into Court. It, however, only showed English Members who were anxious for economy—though now-a-days he found there were very few of such Members—how the public funds were distributed amongst Irish Law Officers. Some of the Officers who had drawn large amounts out of the Public Exchequer were now no more; some of them were on the Bench; and it was, of course, hard to expect the Members of the present *régime* to defend the past system. He was anxious to call attention to one or two points in connection with the change of venue, to which the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Walker) had referred. The hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that this Estimate was largely due to the changes of venue. Money could not be spent in a worse manner. He (Mr. Healy) strongly objected to the changing of a venue; and he joined most heartily with Lord Chief Justice Morris in the condemnation of the practice of taking agrarian offenders out of the venue where they were known, and submitting them to Dublin juries, who were prejudiced against them. He regretted the Lord Chief Justice did not see his way, as a Member of the Privy Council in Ireland, to condemn the practice until Orangemen were to be tried. Better late than never. They were glad to have the support of his Lordship in this matter, although it came so late in the day. The Committee would remember that the hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) grew virtuously indignant the other day, because Londonderry was aspersed, and because the Attorney General for Ireland had ventured to send the case of Doherty to Sligo for trial. The hon. Baronet felt that a slight had been cast on the juries of Londonderry; but no slight whatever was supposed to have been cast upon the bulk of the population of Ireland, seeing that in nearly every case of an agrarian or political character the venues were changed. The people of the different counties were virtually told they were not fit to be put on their oath. The re-action had set in. The Catholics of Ireland were refusing to find verdicts in simple cases, and he was not surprised at it. If he, as a Catholic, were told he was unfit to try political or agrarian cases—that he was only fit to try sheep-stealers and petty felonies, would he be likely to lend himself to the machinery of justice? They found Mr. Justice Lawson, in County Clare, the other day condemning, as a great miscarriage of justice, the conduct of a jury who refused to find a verdict in some case of petty theft. That House thought it a good thing to strengthen the administration of justice by passing the Prevention of Crime Act. It was just possible they had weakened it thereby. They had passed that Act for three years; they proposed to make it perpetual. They passed that Act to punish agrarian and political offenders; but the public life of the country was involved. They must punish other criminals besides political criminals; they must punish forgers, and thieves, and robbers, and persons who were guilty of any other crimes against the Common Law. Yet they were told the Catholics of Ireland were not to be trusted to try what the Orangemen of Dublin were fit to try. This was really a very serious matter. They had all over the country to rely upon the common juries, upon the petty juries. The men who composed such juries were Catholics, because the squires and the landlords would not deign to go into Court to try sheep-stealers; squires and landlords were reserved for the trial of agrarian and political prisoners. He noticed that Catholic juries were beginning to make up their minds that they would leave sheep-stealers, and robbers, and other criminals to be tried by the subscribers of *The Daily Express* as well as political and agrarian offenders. He congratulated the Government upon their administration of justice. In one case the Crown challenged in succession 49 Catholics — one of them a Justice of the Peace — and the Judge before whom the prisoners were tried never protested against the jury packing and the changes of venue, although in the next case, when Mr. Mathews came to be tried, he did so. If he (Mr. Healy) were put on a jury now to try any case, so long as the Prevention of Crime Act continued, so long as he was told by wretches like George Bolton that he was unfit to be put on his oath to try any political case, he should fold his arms and say to the other gentlemen of the jury—"Gentleman, you may do as you please in this matter; I shall be no party to the degradation of my religion and my country by taking part in a farce of this kind." The Government might renew their Prevention of Crime Act; pass it again, and pass it for ever; and then he and his Friends would deal with it, because the people of Ireland were a keen and an educated people, and were getting more and more educated every day. The proceedings in that House were educating them, and the House could no longer do deeds in the dark. The Government had pushed this game against the Catholics too far, and it was to the credit of the Tory Government previously in Office that they never stooped to shameful exclusions such as those of the present Government. To get to the bottom of meanness one must go to the Liberals. They professed to be righteous, and to mean everything for the good of their fellow-men; therefore, everything they did of an oppressive character had reference to their good intentions. He would not care to be a Member of the present Government; and he should not envy the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) if he had to carry on the Government of Ireland as Attorney General, as he presumed he would be in the next Ministry, and if he had to put plaisters on all the wounds that the Liberal Advisers of the Crown had inflicted. That was what things had come to, and the Catholic people of Ireland were apparently determined to read the Government a lesson in this matter, and to tell them that if they only left to the Catholics the trial of small cases they would have no part or lot with the Government. The Catholics of Ireland were high spirited enough not to be made pawns of for the benefit of the Liberal Government. If the Government would not trust them with the high criminal cases, the Government would have to work the arrangements themselves; and he was pleased to see that even the Orangemen were kicking against the action of the Government. He was pleased to see that, as a murder machine, the Prevention of Crime Act was breaking down. Some grit had got into the machine, for even in recent trials Orange jurors had refused to convict, and the case of the Mayo men who were tried at Cork was notorious. These men were taken out of their venue; and he had never heard of a more scandalous travesty of justice than what took place between Mr. Justice Johnson, the Attorney General, Mr. Naish, and Mr. Peter O'Brien. They were well acquainted with Mr. Johnson in that House. They knew him to be a painstaking and courteous official; and the good opinion formed of him in that House was likely to remain with him on the Bench after his action at Cork in regard to the wretched attempt to "bulldoze" him into directing the verdict of the jury, which surpassed everything since the time of Mr. Justice Scroggs or Mr. Justice Jeffreys. The trial had lasted nearly a week; the Court had been sitting all day; and a dialogue of the most extraordinary character that ever had passed between a Judge and jury and counsel took place. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Naish endeavoured to compel Mr. Justice Johnson, by sheer force of bullying, to get a verdict from the jury against the six men who were under trial. His Lordship discharged the jury after they had been sitting till near midnight, and then the foreman made an application that they should not be called upon to serve again. Thereupon Mr. Naish said he would take care that they should not be called upon to serve again at those Assizes, meaning thereby that they were a pack of perjurers, who were not fit to be believed on their oath, and he would take care that the Crown should not again ask them to find a verdict. And this, although several of them had proved most useful to the Crown, for several had already found verdicts for the Crown in previous cases. Mr. Justice Johnson very properly rebuked the great Mr. John Naish, and told the jury that he would ask for their attendance again, and would insist on their coming, "for," he said—and here he delivered himself of a Constitutional dictum which he (Mr. Healy) hoped would be taken to heart—"the prisoners are entitled to your attendance." This dialogue at Cork upon Christmas Eve gave a thorough insight into the jury-packing policy of the Government. It was not 12 men chosen for their impartiality that the Government wanted in the box, but 12 men who they knew beforehand would convict. In other words, it was not the business of a jury they wanted carrying out, but the business of judicial murder. They formed a charge, for instance, against A, and they put B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and so on, in the box. They believed that A was guilty, and they knew that the men in the box were the men to find him guilty, they being men who were very frequently dependent on the Castle for custom, while many of them were probably landlords or agents. They put these men into the box, believing they could get verdicts out of them; and if that was not the reason, why were Catholics not put on the juries? Let the Government get up and tell the Catholics of Ireland that they were unfit to be believed on their oath, or else give some explanation of this persistent system of jury-packing, and challenging juries. He wished, further, to ask why particular venues were chosen? These Mayo prisoners had been kept in prison for 12 months. They were allowed to linger in Castlebar Gaol over two Assizes, and then they were taken to Cork. Englishmen did not know how far Cork was from Mayo; but taking men from one place to the other was pretty much like taking a man from Yorkshire to be tried in London. Then the men were put on trial, not before a jury drawn from the county of Cork, but before a city and county panel, in order that they might be deprived of all chance of a verdict in their favour; and, further, they were put on their trial in that way after the most startling allegations as to their treatment while in prison. Every effort had been made by the Government to break down their firmness; and the late Attorney General for Ireland, now the Master of the Rolls, was not ashamed to get up in that House, in reply to a Question last year, and say—"Oh, yes; of course, these men have been kept in prison for so long"—and his statement was intended to reach the prisoners in their cells—"and important evidence has been discovered." Where was that important evidence? Why was it not produced? Mr. Porter, now Master of the Rolls, when challenged in that House last August, was not ashamed to say the Government had important evidence against these men, and that their action would be justified. He told the right hon. and learned Gentleman then that he did not believe him, and the facts subsequently justified him. The Cork jury acquitted one of these men, after he had been kept eight months in solitary confinement, and that by the direction of Mr. Justice Johnson, after he had been taken from his venue in Mayo. That was the greasy record of Her Majesty's Government. There was one man, Halloran, whom the Judge would not allow to go before a jury, telling them that he was innocent, although the Government had kept him for eight months in prison. Had the Government offered him any compensation? Had they sowed his land for him, or helped to reap his crop? Had they helped his unfortunate wife and children, whom they had deprived of his assistance? What explanation had they to offer? They had endeavoured to get the Cork jury, by threats and intimidation of the character to which Mr. Justice Johnson had been subjected, to convict prisoners. He did not dispute the resources of the Crown to procure a conviction for anything, and he did not dispute the resources of Mr. John Naish to send a man to prison. He had himself had a painful proof of the forensic intelligence of Mr. John Naish; and he had now over his chimney-piece in Dublin the warrant under which he lay in gaol for four months, without any cause being assigned. It was drawn by Mr. John Naish, and Mr. John Naish had the satisfaction of knowing that for the first time since the Star Chamber—the first time since the days of Charles I. —three men had been sent to gaol upon a warrant which disclosed no offence against them. Every time he contemplated that warrant, which he had had as handsomely framed and glazed as his humble means would allow, he bowed down before the genius of Magna Charter and the forensic intelligence of Mr. John Naish. That was the gentleman who at present had in hand the direction of criminal prosecutions in Ireland. But what guarantee was there as to the way in which these venues were worked? Why were the Mayo men sent to Cork? Why were they not sent to an adjacent county, if the venue was to be changed at all? Why should these men be compelled to bring their witnesses 200 or 300 miles, and then to keep them hanging about the Court for several days? Why were they not told when their case was likely to come on? Would the Attorney General for Ireland state why prisoners could not be tried in alphabetical order, so that they might know when they were likely to come on? What reason was there for concealing the date when the case was likely to be tried? Why were the witnesses required to attend for weeks before the trial; and, above all, why was not substantial bail taken in the case of these men? Bail was taken for Mr. Doherty, who was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for shooting out a gentleman's eye in Londonderry. He intended murder, and yet, having blown a man's eye out, he had escaped with 18 months' imprisonment, while a man who had shot at a soldier without hitting him was sentenced for life. Why was Mr. Doherty to shoot out a man's eye, and not get imprisoned for life? Why did he get out on bail? Why was his venue not changed to such a distance as Cork? Mr. Doherty was trotted down from Londonderry to Sligo—a very convenient distance it would seem; and, in addition, he was allowed out on bail. A Protestant was allowed out on bail; but Roman Catholics at Cork, and Kerry, and Mayo lingered for months, and sometimes for a year and-a-half, in prison, eating their heads off in cells six feet by four, deprived of association, kept in solitary confinement, and allowed only two hours' exercise out of the 24. Why was there this difference of treatment? What principle did the Government act upon in this matter? He would like to know something with regard to the matter of Mr. Shaen Carter and Surgeon Wheeler. It was stated that Surgeon Wheeler's bill had to be admitted in full, and the Government had to pay £400 in addition. That was a subject upon which the learned Attorney General for Ireland was able to speak; and he might thank his stars that the Government had treated Surgeon Wheeler in this manner. Why was it that law fees had to be incurred of this extraordinary character, and then the Government should not only have to pay them, but, in addition, to fee the counsel on both sides, and bear costs also? What was the meaning of this state of things? Were the Government to treat the taxpayers' money as they pleased? Finally, there was now going on in Ireland what was like judicial murder. It was a very remarkable thing that the crop of murder trials in Ireland should have all arisen at one particular date. He had got a Return of arrests, ordered through the courtesy of the Chief Secretary, which, by the blundering, he presumed, of someone else, was delayed as long as possible, so that he could not even now use it, as it was being printed. The Return was supposed to be laid on the Table eight or ten months ago; but it had not yet been circulated among Members. Was it printed?

MR. TREVELYAN stated that the Return was printed.

MR. HEALY said, he had seen the Return in manuscript, but not in print. That Return disclosed a very peculiar state of facts. It showed that this epidemic of a conspiracy to murder trials broke out at one particular moment, like a rash, in the judicial mind in Dublin; and it was a peculiar thing that the period of all these murder dates was the time when blood-money first began to circulate through Dublin—namely, when the Phœnix Park murderers were discovered, and Mr. James Carey gave his evidence. The arrests for this conspiracy to murder were all made between March and May, 1883; but they had nearly all broken down. The men were arrested by the score; they were kept in prison for months and months; their business was ruined; their health was ruined; and the Government tried to ruin their character, and then, after all, they were released. Why were the King's County and the Clare men released? They were locked up for three or four months. Mr. Mallin, who made his fame over the Phœnix Park murders, was taken down from Dublin and introduced into the cells of these Crusheen men in Clare, together with Mr. Morphy, the uncertificated bankrupt. They subjected the prisoners to the French system of *juge d' instruction*, and told them their case was hopeless; that they had a witness against them who would swear till all was blue that they were guilty; that their conviction was certain; that they had, therefore, better save themselves. They told those men that the Government were anxious to save them and their wives and families, and to keep them from the clutches of the hangman; and those poor simple farmers were supposed to swallow all this. But not even the blandishments of Mr. Morphy, nor the sinuosities of Mr. Mallin and the Governor of the Gaol, could shake the confidence of the prisoners; and as a consequence they were now free men again. They did not believe Mr. Mallin; they mocked at Mr. Alexander Morphy; and, metaphorically, they put their thumbs to their noses, as far as the regulations permitted, towards the Governor of the Gaol. If this system of persecution and torture was to be permitted; if men were to go into prisoners' cells on the French system and tell men in one cell that So-and-so in the next cell had gone, and they had better make a clean breast of the matter, why not bring back the thumbscrew? They had better have the honest, and frank, and open pitch-cap and triangle, and the rack, and twist the prisoners' necks and torture their frames. There was now before the House the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and he proposed to introduce into that measure an Amendment, making the thumb-screw and the rack permissible in Ireland; because he considered it far more honest and open to cut a man to pieces by inches and to torture his body than to torture his mind. After all, if the Government wanted to get evidence out of the prisoners—and it was permissible to do that—which was more honest and frank—to revert to the time and customs of Queen Elizabeth; or to hang men first and try them afterwards? Yet the nephew of Lord Macaulay was not ashamed—he who had written the *Life of Charles James Fox*—to draw a salary under a Government which permitted infamies of this kind; to allow those things to go on, silencing his conscience with the assurance that the men were guilty after all, if they could only be found out. That was the plaister which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would lay upon any wounded feelings he might have, and if his conscience should feel strained after treatment such as that to which the King's County and Crusheen prisoners had been subjected. This Return certainly disclosed a most remarkable state of things. Among the cases was that of Michael Dilleen, who was arrested on February 20, 1883. He was untried when this Return was issued in December, and he remained untried now because the Governor had discharged him without trial. That had been done, after the Chief Secretary had tried to hang Mr. and Mrs. Clarke for the same offence. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant first tried to hang an innocent man and woman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order; order! That is an imputation which the hon. Gentleman is not justified in making.

Mr. HEALY: Sir Arthur Otway, I will point out to you that this attempt was made, as the Chief Secretary believed, in the discharge of his duty; and if the right hon. Gentleman believed that these people were guilty he was justified in making it.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had endeavoured to hang an innocent man. That is an imputation he is not justified in making in regard to anyone, and I call on him to withdraw it.

Mr. HEALY: Very well, Sir, I will withdraw it, and I say that the Government, of which the right hon. Gentleman is a Member, endeavoured to hang John M'Carthy and John Dilleen after they had failed to hang Mr. and Mrs. Clarke, and I wish the right hon. Gentleman joy of the difference.

Mr. A. F. EGERTON: I rise to Order. I cannot think the hon. Gentleman is justified in saying that the Chief Secretary for Ireland tried to hang anyone.

The Chairman did not again intervene.

Mr. HEALY said, that perhaps the hon. Member did not like to see even the Phœnix Park murderers hanged. He would repeat, for the information of the hon. Gentleman who had just interrupted, that the Government of Ireland, through their Law Advisers, through their Judges, and through their other legal machinery, tried to hang Mr. and Mrs. Clarke for the murder of Constable Linton, in Loughrea; and, having failed to hang them, they put M'Carthy and Dilleen on their trial for the same offence. Let the Government make what they could out of that fact. Points of Order would not get them out of the difficulty; it must be viewed in the light of facts, and it was facts only that would get them out of it. If there were things going on in the Government of Ireland which were a shame and a scandal to this country, it was not by points of Order that they would be able to meet them. If the Government of Ireland was to be amended, it could only be amended by ameliorating measures, and by the healing and beneficent operation of the law. How could they reconcile the population of a country to a spectacle of this kind—that an innocent man and woman were put upon their trial for murder, and, two innocent persons having been acquitted, the Crown then tried to hang other persons for the same offence? If the hon. Gentleman below him, who had interrupted, heard of anything like this in the Soudan, his virtuous British pulse would run up from 70 to 120; but, of course, it was very different when the thing was done in Ireland, and the hon. Member simply thought that any Irishman who alluded to a matter of this kind should be muzzled. Before he passed from the case of this unfortunate man he wished to say that the Government, having discharged him without trial, then come to a determination to persecute him. He was a commercial traveller for some species of wire, and he was followed from town to town, and from village to village, all over the country by detectives in the most open and ostentatious manner; so that, having failed to hang him, they now tried to blight his character and to ruin him. Then came the case of Michael Muldowney, who was arrested in 1883 with four companions. Muldowney had been a policeman on protection duty, and he was arrested on the 26th of January, 1883; but, in order to give him a long day before hanging him, they put back his trial until February, 1884. They kept him in gaol for 13 months, and now they had failed because a jury of Sligo Orangemen and landlords refused to find this policeman guilty. In fact, they declared that he was not guilty, and the Government had committed a crime themselves in keeping an innocent man in prison without trial for 13 months. He would like to know what had become of the Habeas Corpus Act? There had been a great row in the House, and all the Irish Members had been suspended half-a-dozen times over for endeavouring to oppose the passing of the Act of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster). The present Chief Secretary was a good deal cleverer than the right hon. Member for Bradford. He did not go at things in the same bull-headed sort of way; but the malignity was there all the same. The right hon. Gentleman did not pass a Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. He charged men with murder, kept them without trial for 13 months, and then discharged them. That was the character of the Government of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The Irish Members were in that House for weeks. There was a crisis in the British Constitution occasioned by the introduction of the Coercion Act, and they were engaged in resisting the passing of the measure of the right hon. Member for Bradford. But the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary suspended trial by jury by a single stroke of his pen, and humble peasants were kept in gaol without trial for more than 12 months. The right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary struck at the liberty of the humble cottager in Ireland, whereas the Act of the right hon. Member for Bradford was directed at Members of Parliament. The Chief Secretary for Ireland used his authority against peasants, hoping that, as they were humble persons with no votes, so that they could not affect the elections, they would in that way attract very little attention; and so the Government went on, and a sad rosary it was—arrests in February, 1883, January, 1883, November, 1882, March, 1883, April, 1883, and so on, through a long list of cases without trial, showing that this "conspiracy to murder" charge broke out at the very time the blood-money began to be circulated. So far as the murder machine was concerned the bottom was out of the pot, and it would not work any longer. Even the Emergency men of Dublin were satiated with blood. Her Majesty's Government had now hanged quite enough; and he would suggest to them that they should drop the system. The lawyers of Dublin ought to be satisfied. One of them had pocketed, according to his own account, from £8,000 to £9,000 in one year, and another from £7,000 to £8,000, so that they must have done very well. He was sorry to think that the Solicitor General for Ireland had fallen upon a lean and hungry time; but, of course, after seven years of plenty for the lawyers, he hoped they would have seven years of famine. It was quite evident that the hon. and learned Gentleman was not going to have a very good time, and he had no doubt that the hon. and learned Gentleman fully appreciated the fact. He (Mr. Healy) thought the Irish Members should have some explanation of the system which had been adopted of venue-changing and jury-packing. Let them have some assurance from the hon. and learned Gentleman on his incoming to Office that he would no longer be a party to the challenging of Catholic juries by dozens, by scores, and by fifties, and that he would no longer insult the majority of the people of Ireland by telling them that they were not fit to sit on juries—that Orangemen might be believed on their oaths, but that Catholics could not be.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) rose to continue the debate, when——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the only fault he had to find with the able speech of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was in respect of the violence of the language he had used. He thought it would have been better that the subject before the Committee should have been discussed in a calmer spirit. As he understood it, in the main the speech of the hon. Member was a direct attack upon the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act by the Executive in Ireland; and he thought that a great portion of that speech would have had more force if it had been delivered at the time that Act was being passed. The hon. Member at the time gave to the Act all the opposition in his power; but it must be remembered that the Act had, by the voice of Parliament, been put into the hands of the Irish Government as a means not only of detecting crime, but of punishing it when detected. It was, therefore, the duty of the Executive to use it in every legitimate way, and for every lawful purpose. The hon. Member for Monaghan had said that this Act had been used solely against the peasants in Ireland. He (the Solicitor General for Ireland) thought it would have been more appropriate if the hon. Member had remembered that the Prevention of Crime Act was directed towards the suppression of crimes, many of which were committed not against the landlords and the high in the land, but against the peasants themselves, and against the humblest persons in Ireland. The hon. Member had said that the Act was used against the peasants; but he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) thought the Committee would agree with him that it had been used mainly for the purpose of protecting the peasants. The hon. Member had complained of the way in which the right to change the venue had in some cases been exercised by the Attorney General for Ireland. He understood the complaint to be that the venue had been changed in some cases which the hon. Member had enumerated, and in others which he had not enumerated. The duty of changing the venue in criminal cases was, in his opinion, a high, solemn, and responsible duty put upon the Attorney General for Ireland; and it was requisite that he should exercise that duty whenever he thought it necessary in the interests of justice that he should do so, in order to secure a more impartial trial. Accordingly, the Attorney General for Ireland had exercised that responsible duty in a good many cases, and in so doing had shown that he fully appreciated the solemn trust committed to him. He (the Solicitor General for Ireland) would now refer to the cases to which attention had been called by the hon. Member for Monaghan, in which the Attorney General for Ireland had considered it his duty to change the venue. The first was a case which came before Chief Justice Morris. In that case the Attorney General for Ireland moved for a change of venue, and the result was a conviction. In the next case—that of Doherty, who was tried the other day at Sligo—there was also a conviction. Therefore, in the two cases to which the hon. Member had specially referred, so far from justice not having been done, justice had really been secured. At all events, the conclusion of the Attorney General for Ireland, that justice would would not be done without a change of venue, was justified by the convictions which followed. What was the third case? The hon. Member had referred to the Crossmolina case, where the venue was changed from Mayo to Cork. It must be remembered that no hardship fell upon a prisoner in consequence of the venue being changed, because all his expenses for counsel and witnesses were paid for him by the Crown, and the prisoners, as far as their expenses were concerned, were in a far better position than they would have been if the original venue had remained, because, in that case, they would have had to defray their own expenses. The hon. Member said that the working of the Prevention of Crime Act had led to a disinclination on the part of Catholics to find a verdict in an ordinary case. Now, he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) altogether disclaimed such an imputation against the Catholics. He believed that the Catholics of Ireland were a thoroughly loyal body of men; he had many personal friends among them, and he was well acquainted with their character.

MR. HEALY: Why do not you put them on the juries?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. Member asked why they were not put upon juries. All that he could say was that during the whole course of his official life he should not be a party to exclude any man from being put upon a jury on account of his religion, and he should make it part of his duty to see that they never were excluded. He was, further, quite sure that the Attorney General for Ireland would not exclude any of his own co-religionists from juries on account of their religion. The hon. Member had referred to the observations made by Mr. Justice Lawson, in Clare, in the case in which a jury refused to find a verdict where the venue had not been changed; but, surely, the arguments of the hon. Member went the other way, because this case showed that where the venue was not changed the jury refused to find a verdict; whereas in those cases in which the venue had been changed a verdict had been found. Certainly that was a strong reason for the exercise of the discretion now vested in the Attorney General for Ireland. The hon. Member himself and the Committee would, he was sure, feel that it was not right for him to make any observation upon the Crossmolina case, because that case was to be tried next week; and nothing would be more unjust, either to the prisoner or the prosecution, than to have a case, which was on for trial in the course of a few days, commented upon by any Law Officer of the Crown. He would, therefore, forbear from saying one word as to the facts of the Crossmolina case. As regarded the other cases referred to by the hon. Member, there was the case of the man Muldowney. Muldowney was a man who was acquitted on one charge; but there was another charge upon which he was to be tried. He was acquitted on the charge of conspiracy to murder; and he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) believed it would be found that impartiality, and not injustice, had resulted from the change of venue, seeing that in each of the three cases referred to by the hon. Member the prisoner had been acquitted. The hon. Member had stated that in regard to the cases of conspiracy to murder it was a significant fact that they broke out simultaneously with blood-money being offered by the Irish Government. But they knew, by the admission of the prisoners themselves, that the conspiracy to murder really occurred before the rewards were offered, and that many such cases were existing and known in Ireland. He would not say anything about the Crossmolina case, in which several prisoners had been sent up for trial; but he might take the Clare case, the Crusheen case, and the Letterfrack case of conspiracy to murder.

Mr. HEALY: And the King's County case also.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, that in the Letterfrack case of conspiracy to murder the men were arrested on the 8th of April. Nine persons were arrested; they were committed for trial on the 18th of July; and the case came on for trial at the Winter Assize at Cork. What was the result? Each and every one of the nine prisoners pleaded guilty to the charge of conspiracy to murder for which they had been sent for trial. Taking the cases referred to by the hon. Member as typical cases, what did they find? They found one case still untried; in another the jury disagreed; and in the last nine persons admitted their crime.

Mr. O'BRIEN: What about the King's County and Galway case?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, he had not come to that yet. The Crusheen case was one of the most horrible outrages ever committed. A man's house was attacked. The man, like a gallant fellow, came to the door and fired at one of his assailants and marked him, so that he was afterwards found by the police. That assailant eventually became an informer, and gave evidence impeaching some 10 or 11 persons, who were arrested. One of these men gave evidence in the first instance, but backed out of it afterwards, and they were all detained.

Mr. HEALY: Detained, after being three months in gaol, and then let out on bail.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, he was quite aware that the men had now been let out on bail by the Court of Queen's Bench; but the application for bail was made to the Judges, who exercised their discretion in the matter without regard to the Executive; and in this instance it was exercised against the opinion of the Crown, and notwithstanding the opposition of the Crown. The reason for letting the men out upon bail was that the man Egan had backed out of his testimony, and there was no evidence except that of the informer. As a matter of practice, if there was no material corroboration of an informer's testimony, the Courts held that there was no evidence upon which a jury could convict. Therefore, these men had been let out on their recognizances, and were out at this moment, notwithstanding the sworn evidence of the informer, who, beyond all doubt, was on the scene, and who had been sentenced to penal servitude for life in connection with it. He could not allow the observations of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), in reference to the trial at Cork in connection with the Crossmolina conspiracy to murder case, to pass altogether without comment; and he felt it his duty to say one word out of regard to his right hon. Friend who now filled the Office of Chief Secretary with such high credit to himself. The hon. Member accused the Attorney General for Ireland of having used words implying that he would take very good care the men were not tried before a certain jury. He admitted that the Attorney General for Ireland did decline to try the men at that particular time; but why was it? It was because the jury were thoroughly exhausted by a trial which had lasted a week; and it would have been unjust to everybody in Court to send them again before the jury after such an exhaustive trial, taking into consideration also the length of time the jury had been away from home. There was a discussion between the prosecution and the Judge; but it was upon a question of law, in which the Attorney General for Ireland questioned the law laid down by the Judge, which he had a right to do in the interests of justice. The hon. Member had referred to the case of M'Carthy and Dilleen. It was quite true that Clarke and his wife were tried for the same murder, and it was quite true also that they were acquitted; and, therefore, the observations which the hon. Member had made against the Irish Executive and the administration of the law in connection with this case were rather an argument to show that the law had been fairly administered. On the 8th of October, 1883, the Court of Queen's Bench allowed M'Carthy out on bail; and in the case of Dilleen the prisoner was put on his trial, and two witnesses out of three were examined on the part of the Crown. The prosecuting counsel saw that the main witness was not reliable, and, finding that that was so, they declined to press the trial, knowing that if successful they would have been open to the charge of hanging a man upon a trial which was not satisfactory. Was that any charge against the Executive? Ought it not rather to redound to their credit? The hon. Member had also referred to the cases of Doherty and Muldowney. In the case of Muldowney the jury disagreed, although the hon. Member had referred to the case as though the prisoner had been acquitted. As a matter of fact, he would be tried again, and there were four or five other persons who would be tried again. Muldowney had once occupied the position of a policeman, and the Crown had very rightly put him forward for trial, in order to show the people that his position would not shield him. He would not say a word about the case of Doherty, because, terrible murder as it was, the jury had disagreed, and the man was to be tried again. It, therefore, came under the category of an untried case. He would only say that where the jury disagreed there must have been a strong *primâ facie* case for committing a man for trial. The only other observation he would make was in reference to the statement of the hon. Member, that attempts had been made by the Crown to obtain juries more favourable to conviction. That statement he denied in the strongest terms. He denied that any man had ever been set aside, or ever would be told to stand aside, on account of his religion. ["Oh!" *from the Irish Members.*] Yes; he repeated it, and he should regard such an action as an insult to the Catholics of Ireland. He had never been, and never would be, a party to such an action, and he believed the Attorney General for Ireland never had been, and never would be. At the same time, they all knew that there were rules upon which juries were struck. Those rules were necessary for the due administration of justice, and among them was the right of challenge, which when exercised had been exercised in order that proper persons might be put into the jury-box—men who would give a fair and impartial attention to the evidence. It was necessary sometimes to set aside jurors, for instance, in order that men might not be put into the box who had a prejudice against capital punishment. He had now attempted to deal temperately with the observations which the hon. Member for Monaghan had made upon the conduct of the Irish Executive regarding these trials. The Irish Executive had been entrusted with the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act. That administration was committed to them by Parliament, for the repression and detection of crime, and in the exercise of their duty they had put the powers of the Act into operation. He contended that the Irish Executive had not abused the powers conferred upon them; but had merely acted within the lines of the Constitution, in order to diminish crime and to protect poor men—peasant farmers and labourers—from violence. The Committee would remember how beneficial its provisions had proved in the prevention of crime. During the last six months the soil of Ireland had been stained by one murder only; and, omitting threatening letters, there had only been 200 outrages. He maintained that that satisfactory result was mainly to be attributed to the action of the Irish Executive.

Mr. SEXTON said, that it could not be asserted that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland, in the course of the speech he had addressed to the Committee, had shown any of that timidity of assertion which was supposed to belong to those who were not used to Parliamentary debating. On the contrary, the hon. Gentleman had shown an audacity of statement, which he (Mr. Sexton) could only compare with the hardihood of the promises he had recently made to the electors of Londonderry. The hon. and learned Gentleman was now sitting upon the Treasury Bench fresh from that election, in which he had promised large reforms to the electors, which, however, were not likely to arrive until the hon. and learned Gentleman had reached a much more elevated region. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not been ashamed to come forward that night before a Committee familiar with the administration of the law in Ireland and tell them that he had not only never been a party to any action for the exclusion of Roman Catholics from the jury-box, but that such a system had never been carried out in Ireland at all. In regard to the promises of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he could only say he feared their value must be discounted by the value of his other recent promises to the House. He wondered at the mental audacity of any man who, himself a native of Ireland, could stand up before the Irish Members of that House and venture to convey to the Committee that it had not been a settled and cardinal rule, in the administration of the law in Ireland, to shut Catholics out from the jury-box. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman mean to convey that Catholics had been shut out from the jury-box by virtue of a perpetual accident? They had only to look around in order to see Catholics excluded from the Public Service. In a county like Fermanagh, where the majority of the people were Catholics, there was not a single Catholic magistrate put upon the Magisterial Bench. They would find, in every arena of public life in Ireland, the Catholic deliberately shut out from all share of the influence, prestige, power, and emolument which employment in the Public Service ensured. How, then, were they to credit the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman that the exclusion of Roman Catholics from the jury-box, instead of being part of the deliberate and vile system which prevailed in Ireland, was only the result of accident? He would invite hon. Members to look back upon the records of Green Street for the last few years, and other records in connection with the administration of so-called justice in Ireland, in order to see if they could explain to him how, from a panel composed of one-half Catholics, 12 Protestants invariably found their way into the jury-box, while 50 Catholics were ordered to stand aside. If the hon, and learned Gentleman was in earnest in regard to his promise, let him accept the alternative of resigning his Office, or refusing to be a party to the present disgraceful system of insulting Catholics where the administration of the law was concerned. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would take that course, he (Mr. Sexton) would feel disposed to regret the fact which had been referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), that the seven fat years for lawyers were over, and the seven lean years had come; because, after such a speech, if the hon. and learned Gentleman only carried out his promise, no rewards or emoluments in the power of the Crown to confer in Ireland would be too high to signalize the merits of the hon. and learned Gentleman. But it had struck him, in listening to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that he was disposed to take credit to the Executive of Ireland for that which did not belong to them. In one case—the case of Halloran—the man was tried after a change of venue, and, after having been kept eight months in gaol, he was acquitted by the direction of the Judge. Then, how could the Irish Executive claim any credit to themselves when they had kept the man eight months in gaol, broke down his spirit, and then put him into the dock, doing all they could to procure a conviction which would have sentenced him to penal servitude for life—how could the hon. and learned Gentleman stand up smilingly at the Table, with that modesty already so fully developed in him, and claim credit for a matter over which the Irish Executive had no control whatever? Then, again, in the case of Dilleen, they kept that man 10 or 11 months in gaol; they violated Magna Charta; offended against the primary principles of the Constitution; and at the end of 11 months they brought the man into Court, and, having no evidence against him, decided not to prosecute him. By a false display of grace and favour they saved themselves from the ignominy which would have fallen to their lot if they had put him in the dock, because the jury would have acquitted him. But, notwithstanding, they attacked the man's character in a most insidious way, by depriving him of that open arena for his defence which would have been afforded if he had been put upon his trial. The whole system of criminal procedure in Ireland, which the Irish Members were arraigning that night, was one that would disgrace the worst and meanest of those Oriental despotisms over which the Government were continually professing in that House to exercise the influences of their pure and undefiled Christianity. There had been some talk of Magna Charta in connection with Ireland; but to link two such subjects together was, to his mind, one of the boldest flights of imagination. They had almost entirely forgotten Magna Charta, and if it had any place in their minds it was but as a dim and vague tradition. Something was known of it under the Tory Government; but the Whigs had quite abolished it. And the Solicitor General for Ireland, by a piece of special pleading, endeavoured to make out a case in favour of the venue being changed of trials under the Prevention of Crime Act; but he (Mr. Sexton) said it was not merely the change of venue, but the whole system in regard to suspected persons, that was to be condemned. From the moment the policeman laid his hand upon the shoulder of the person suspected to the moment of trial before the Judge, it was the old, old story of baseless insinuations and malignant tales. The man who incurred the malice of the local policeman had suspicion directed against him; he was arrested and brought to trial; but not brought to trial in the locality where his character was known, or within a reasonable distance of that locality; nor was he brought to trial within a reasonable time; but, in defiance of Magna Charta and the spirit of the Constitution, and by a process of stealthy, dark, and cowardly torture he was thrown into gaol, the Executive trusting to the chapter of accidents that he might die there, or, owing to broken health, might plead guilty to the charge brought against him. Men in that condition might be stricken by the terrors of midnight visits to their cells—by a system of villainy worse than that of Fouché under the First Empire—they might be told that their companions had broken down and given evidence against them. Or it might be said to them by the creature who crept into their cells, as it was said at Kilmainham—"Do you hear that bell ringing? It is for the execution of such a man. Your companions have informed upon you." It had become part of the policy of the Executive to say to them—"Unless you give evidence and save yourself from those who have betrayed you, that bell will ring for your execution, as it rings this morning for another's." Was it to such murderous devices as these that the Government had come in Ireland? It was not enough that they kept men for years in gaol; that they broke down their spirits there, and overcame them with the terror of unscrupulous lies; but they moved them from Connemara to Dublin, from Mayo to Cork, from the parts of the country where they had a good character that might benefit them to others where they were unknown, and placed them in the hands of a body of men who were known to be opposed to them by political feeling and by prejudice. When the Executive had exhausted the last penny they had for their defence, they threw these men into the hands of their political enemies; into an atmosphere in which passion obscured reason, and prejudice denied them any chance of justice. It was too late in the day even for Gentlemen with the calm and deliberate assurance of the Solicitor General for Ireland to rise at the Table of the House and pretend that any English Member, however ill-informed as to the affairs of Ireland, could believe that the Irish criminal system had any other object or principle than that of hanging, or sending to penal servitude, the man who once incurred the suspicion of the police. He observed that this Vote included the charge of £5,000 for the detection of crime in connection with the Phœnix Park murders; and he thought the time had come when it might be interesting and useful for the country to be made aware of the disposition of that amount. It was no longer a question of the personal safety of the informers; everyone knew who were the informers in the case of the Phœnix Park murders; and as there could be few things more interesting to the public than severely to scrutinize the conduct of the Government in obtaining evidence by the hope of reward, he thought the Committee ought to be told who were the informers who received this money. One reason for making this application was that Carey had stated that he only received from the Government a cheque for £100. Now, if Carey was the principal informer of a body of which there were so few, and if he only received £100, he (Mr. Sexton) was anxious to discover how such a sum as £5,000 could have been expended? He was much puzzled to account for this sum, because, in the case of the old man Quin, what happened? Immediately after he was murdered, the police arrested his widow in connection with another agrarian case; they took her from home and conveyed her to the depôt for Crown witnesses, and kept her there until the trial came on. And while £5,000 were to be given in the case of the Phœnix Park murders, and while persons in the West of Ireland had received £500 a-piece for information, he was told that the widow of this old man, who proved the case of the Crown and obtained the conviction of the prisoner, had been munificently presented with £5. He should like an explanation of this disparity of giving £5 in one case and £500 in another.

Mr. KENNY said, he had not had the advantage of hearing the whole of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. He was quite prepared to admit that the hon. and learned Gentleman had stated his case rather temperately, although he must observe that the moderation of his language was in remarkable contrast to the vehemence of his delivery. The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to one of the cases which had been instanced by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) in support of his argument, and he was bound to say that the Solicitor General for Ireland entirely misstated that case, and the circumstances which surrounded it. The prisoners were arrested in the spring of 1883 by Mr. Clifford Lloyd in two different portions of the county—about 10 or 11 of them were arrested in Crusheen, one in Ennis, and eight or nine in Miltown. The information against the Crusheen prisoners was principally that of the informer Trubidy, who had been convicted of an attack at night upon a house of which the occupier, a man named Ford, was wounded. The Solicitor General for Ireland had stated that the man came out and shot at Trubidy and wounded him, the result being that Trubidy was captured and sentenced to penal servitude for life. Returning to the Crusheen prisoners, they were kept in gaol for three months on the evidence of Troubleday. The man Egan had nothing to do with the matter. It was said he had backed out of his evidence; but the truth was that he had backed out of what was alleged to be his evidence by Mr. Clifford Lloyd—out of Mr. Clifford Lloyd's concoction, not out of any evidence of his own. At the end of three months, the Crusheen prisoners were brought up for trial at the Ennis Assizes. The Crown sought to postpone the trial, and keep the men in prison until the Cork Winter Assizes; but, fortunately, for the prisoners, Mr. Justice Barry presided at the Ennis Assizes, and who, having listened to the reasons put forward by the Crown, liberated the men up on bail. Now, it was expected by every person who knew anything whatever of the case that the men would not be tried again. But the men were summoned to appear in Cork at the Winter Assizes, where they were kept for three weeks without trial; during the Christmas holidays they were told they could go back to Clare, which they did; they were then summoned back to Cork, and when the Assizes were over some of them were told they might go home, and one of them was compelled to give bail, with two sureties, to come up again when called upon. It was a remarkable thing that, as a protest against this continued illegality and barbarity on the part of the Executive, one of the prisoners, a most respectable man, was elected to the position of rate-collector by the Board of Guardians in his district, and that the Local Government Board of Ireland, over which the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant presided, having at first refused to sanction the appointment, were afterwards compelled to do so. As he had stated, these men were kept in Cork during the Winter Assizes. In answer to a Question put by him to the Solicitor General for Ireland the other day, he was informed that the men were not tried because there was not sufficient evidence; that it was only a case of strong suspicion. But, if that were so, why was it that the Crown Prosecutor, at the Summer Assizes at Ennis, kept the case back until the Winter Assizes at Cork, the men being in gaol all the time; and why was it that men arrested on suspicion were brought to Cork and kept there six weeks at great expense? It was simply because the law in Ireland was another name for persecution. One of these men, who held a position of responsibility at Ennis, lost his position in consequence of the treatment he had received. He believed it was simply to ruin these men, who were respectable farmers in the county, that they were taken away from their homes, and that their farms were allowed to go to waste. If the Government had had their way, and if it had not been for Mr. Justice Barry, who presided at the Assizes, they would have been kept in prison from March, 1883, to the end of January, 1884, when they would have been liberated, because, as the Solicitor General for Ireland said, there was only a case of strong suspicion against them. What did the Solicitor General for Ireland mean by defending, with such an affectation of injured innocence, the administration of justice in Ireland? Did the hon. and learned Gentleman intend to obtain justice for these prisoners, who had been liberated after 10 months' persecution, because it was found after that period that the Crown officials were only trying to fish out sufficient evidence in a case which proved to be merely one of strong suspicion? As his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had pointed out, it was no doubt conveyed to these men, when they were locked up separately in their cells, that So-and-so was going to give evidence, and that the individual addressed, perhaps the father of a family, might save himself by doing the same. It was so in the case of Egan, who, it was said, required to be protected by the police for having given evidence—who went to the parish priest at Miltown, and told him to use his influence to get the policemen recalled, and that he wanted no protection, which it was alleged he stood in need of simply in order to spread a want of confidence amongst these men, and so get them to give evidence against each other. The effect of sending the policemen was not only to injure the prisoners, but to place the man in a false position. This was but a single instance of what had occurred; and he believed that if the other cases selected by the Solicitor General for Ireland were analyzed in the same way as he (Mr. Kenny) had analyzed this case, the result would be the same. He also wished to refer briefly to the item of £5,000 in the Estimate for information leading to the detection of crime. How, he asked, had this increase occurred? The Estimate of last year was a little over £2,000, as against £5,000 this year, and he asked the Solicitor General or the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to account for this extraordinary difference. The system pursued of rewarding informers in Ireland was one which the Government had resolutely refused to throw any light upon; while it would appear, from what had transpired, that in respect of the money paid some of them had been unfairly treated and others unfairly rewarded. Carey was stated to have received only £100; and this, from what had transpired, would lead one to believe that the reward given to Carey was considerably in excess of the rewards given in other cases. Therefore, he asked what were the exact amounts paid to the informers? And he was sure that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would have no objection to state to the Committee the manner in which the money had been disbursed, and whether the charges which the hon. Member for Sligo had levelled against the Irish Executive were true or not.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not think it necessary to discuss in detail, or even to refer at all, to the cases which had been brought under the notice of the Committee. The Solicitor General for Ireland had applied himself to those cases. It must, he thought, be obvious to every Member of the Committee that his hon. and learned Friend had not shrunk from the fullest investigation, and that he was desirous to present to the Committee the clearest information as to what he and his Colleagues had done; and he (Mr. Gibson) believed that the opinion of the Committee would be that the action of the Law Officers in reference to this case, however it might be regarded by those who challenged it, was due to a sincere and anxious desire to advance the cause of justice. He passed on to consider the general observations which had been made in the course of the discussion in reference to the administration of justice in Ireland. One of those had reference to so-called jury-packing. That charge had been made very often, and hon. Members were beginning to be tolerably familiar with it. It was, of course, a grave and serious charge. It was one that could be easily put forward, and which must be looked into fairly in order to see whether it rested on any sufficient foundation. As he understood it, the charge amounted to this—that the jury was put into the box, not with the desire that they should consider the evidence fairly and impartially for themselves in order to do justice, but with the desire that they should register such a verdict as might be required of them. But what evidence was there to support such a charge as that? Having filled the Office of Attorney General for Ireland during some years, he was unable to think that anyone entrusted with that responsible and anxious Office should have any other desire than to secure for prisoners on their trial jurors who were impartial and independent. He did not believe that in recent years any change had taken place in the direction of having any regard whatever to the religion of jurors. That was his deliberate opinion. They all remembered the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Porter), as well as his Predecessor (Mr. Law). Those Gentlemen were entitled to all respect, and he was sure they were actuated by no such views; and he was equally sure that the same might be said of the present Attorney General, who was a devoted-Roman Catholic, and entitled to as much respect as anyone at the Irish Bar. Another charge made by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) in the course of his speech had reference to the changes of venue. He was not quite clear that he understood the exact position from which the hon. Member wished this question to be regarded; but, however that might be, he thought the time had come for a clear and logical statement on the subject. It must be recognized in all cases that it was desirable to have machinery for changes of venue. But then came the question as to the cases in which that machinery should be applied. He believed that the rule which regulated changes of venue in Ireland was the same as it was in England. Where it was found that there was a disturbance of public opinion, and the prevalence of strong feelings in a locality, it was desirable to change the venue to another locality, the inhabitants of which could supply jurors of impartiality. It was that principle which governed changes of venue in Ireland. It was not denied that there should be some machinery for the changing of venue; and he could not think of any better way of dealing with the matter than to leave it to the discretion of the Attorney General for Ireland. Whom were they to trust, if not the highest Law Officer under the Crown—that was to say, the Attorney General, who, in Ireland, was the Public Prosecutor? Of course, hon. Members could always question his action; but then, if they impugned either his motives or his discretion, they must listen to the answer to the charge; they must insist on the question being fairly argued. After all, it was a question of discretion; and on this matter he ventured to think that everyone who had listened to the question would arrive at the conclusion that in many of the cases—as he was himself satisfied on all the cases, so far as he had heard them—it was reasonable, and in the interest of fair trial, that there should be changes of venue; and he had not heard one syllable to induce him to think that the exercise of discretion on the part of the Attorney General for Ireland was not only fair and just from his own point of view, but also was not sound in the interests of justice that he was bound to look after. One other observation and he (Mr. Gibson) had done—one passing observation as to what the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), in the rather dramatic peroration of his speech, described he would do if he were in the jury box and called upon to address his 11 colleagues. He (Mr. Gibson) was not likely ever to have an opportunity of witnessing such a proceeding. [Mr. HEALY: No; I should be challenged.] He was not alluding to the hon. Member's position, but to his own misfortune in not being likely ever to be one of the 11 jurymen who would be addressed by the hon. Member. As he understood the dramatic position of the hon. Gentleman it would be this—that he would fold his arms and pose like an orator before the remaining 11 men, and say that he would be no party to having anything to do with the matter. Well, he (Mr. Gibson) was confident that a moment's reflection would satisfy the hon. Member that he would not do anything of the kind, if called upon to act as a juryman, for the simple reason that before he could indulge in the luxury of dramatic oratory he would have sworn the preliminary oath that he would give a true verdict according to the evidence. The time for the hon. Member to make the declaration that he would be no party to the matter would be before he went into the jury-box, and not after he was sworn to give a true verdict. He (Mr. Gibson) had not intended to say anything about the Prevention of Crime Act; but he found himself bound to do so, in consequence of one or two observations that had fallen from the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), and from the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The hon. Member for Sligo had declared that the Prevention of Crime Act had failed; but that did not seem to him (Mr. Gibson) a fair way of looking at it, and he was by no means satisfied that the hon. Member for Sligo thought that himself. After all, the effect of the Prevention of Crime Act was not to be measured by pointing out how it had been administered in some of the cases—not very numerous cases—that had been tried under it; but it was to be judged by its great preventive operations. That was a criticism never to be lost sight of. At present, as they knew from recent Returns, agrarian offences in Ireland had fallen to a very reduced level compared with what they were a year or two ago; and that reduction should, he thought, be very largely attributed to the preventive operation of the Prevention of Crime Act. Of the other point dealt with by the hon. Member, he did not propose to discuss or to say anything upon. There had been observations made with regard to the payment of rewards for the detection of crime. Well, the particular rewards mentioned in this Estimate were for the detection of the Phœnix Park murderers. Of course, no one could fail to recognize the immense gravity of those crimes, the serious nature of the organization that planned them, the firmness of the courage that was necessary to cope with them, and the heavy reward that it was necessary to give to those who led to their detection, seeing that many of these people sacrificed their means of subsistence to give evidence. That was a remark which he did not doubt would commend itself to the judgment of the Committee. He was aware that on this Vote in recent years, in reference to Irish law charges and criminal prosecutions, there had always been a very keen and a very full discussion. For his own part, he did not object to the most searching investigation into these matters, when so many charges were made in Ireland in reference to the administration of justice; and he thought it was just as well there should be an opportunity given to have them fully and deliberately examined. The Law Officer in charge of the Vote should be afforded the fullest and most ample opportunity of showing that he had nothing to conceal and nothing to be afraid of in giving an explanation. He was bound to say that he had listened carefully to the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, and that the explanation the hon. and learned Gentleman had given had been perfectly satisfactory. Even those who had criticized the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement had not denied its accuracy; and, moreover, the temperate language in which that statement had been delivered was worthy of the greatest credit.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he rose, not for the purpose of taking any part in the discussion which Irish Members had initiated with regard to the failure of justice in Ireland, on which subject an English Member, perhaps, was not so competent to form an opinion; but he rose for the purpose of asking for information on this Vote in reference to a subject which English Members, or, at all events, the House of Commons, was entitled to claim some statement from the Government upon. He would touch upon this matter in continuation of the questions he had put to the Chief Secretary with regard to it when the Estimates were before the House two years ago. He had abstained from raising the question last year in the hope that some reform would show itself in the administration, but he had been disappointed in that expectation; and, therefore, he must trouble the Committee with one or two observations. This Vote, so far as its pecuniary aspect was concerned, was of £10,000 for general law expenses in Ireland, the original sum having been £15,384. This was an enormous sum, £10,000, being an increase on the £15,384, particularly as they had heard the satisfactory account given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland of the enormous diminution of crime in Ireland during the last six months of 1883, and, therefore, for the 12 months of 1883-4. Here they had nine months of an enormous diminution in crime, and yet they were asked to vote an increase of £10,000. If he turned back to the Estimates of last year he found this same peculiarity, or, at all events, this same weakness, if such an expression could be used. The original charge last year was £12,000, and the Supplementary Estimate was £10,000, precisely the same sum as that now asked for, which was a singular thing. They were now asked to vote £25,384 for extra law expenses, and to the ordinary English mind that charge would suggest itself as the expense of the administration of the law—that was to say, by using the words "law expenses," they would mean solicitors' charges, counsel's fees, witnesses' fees, and the cost of the general administration of justice. The ordinary English mind would look upon this Estimate as similar to sums with this title in the English Estimates; but if they turned to the Irish Votes they would find—and he took now the actual expenditure of last year, because they had not got the Appropriation Grant, and, therefore, did not know what this year would show—that the solicitors had £22,000, the prosecutors had £33,000, for general law expenses £20,000 was charged, and the Law Officers of the Crown divided between them £15,000, the counsel's fees, in addition, being £19,000. Now, he contended that that was a state of things which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant could not sanction, and which he ought to put his foot down upon with strong determination. Such a state of things was utterly unknown in this country, for last year the entire expenses of the administration of justice in England had been £270,000 for a population of 20,000,000, while in Ireland, with a population of 5,000,000, the charge had been £120,000. It appeared to him that the Committee was entitled to know the meaning of this extravagant expenditure; they were entitled to know on this ground—that it was a most dangerous thing to give a class of men an interest in criminal prosecutions. There could be no reason why criminal prosecutions should cost twice as much in Ireland as they did in England. Why should the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland—and in saying this he was speaking with all respect of the Gentlemen who held those Offices, and was not referring personally to anybody, but to present and past officials—receive for their work between them three times as much as the Prime Minister, and more than twice as much as the salary of the Lord Chancellor in his legal capacity? He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to tell them how this money was spent; what it was wanted for; what it meant; and he would press the right hon. Gentleman to say why the same economy practised in connection with English prosecutions could not be exercised in Ireland; and why, at all events, the Government could not root out the evil of putting, as it seemed, a premium on these criminal prosecutions?

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he hoped, before this debate closed, right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench would give an answer to the weighty and important questions that had been addressed to them by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). He (Mr. Sullivan) wished, in the few words he had to say, to make some reference to the plea put forward by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland with respect to the important question of jury-packing in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman had virtuously and indignantly denied that there was any intention on the part of the Law Officers of the Crown to exclude Catholics from the jury-box in criminal cases. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who spoke from that (the Opposition) side of the House, quite agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland on the opposite side of the House. But the Committee could not forget that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin was himself an ex-Attorney General for Ireland. It was a very natural thing for these legal officials, the present Solicitor General for Ireland, and the ex-Attorney General, to be quite agreed as to the aspects of this question. He (Mr. Sullivan) did not wonder at that, because between the ex-Law Officers on the Opposition side of the House and the present Law Officers over the way there was but the difference of the breadth of the Table. They did not know how soon the situations of the hon. and learned Gentlemen might be reversed — they could not tell how soon legal Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House might have to resume the operations they practised in former years in Ireland when they sat on the other side. Who could be surprised at these hon. and right hon. and learned Gentlemen supporting each other on this important question, and giving each other certificates of good character? But all that would not satisfy the minds of the people of Ireland, who desired to know the whole truth of this important matter. The Irish people could not be deceived by the special pleading of legal Gentlemen on either side of the House. They knew the facts—they had had sore experience of them; and however these special pleadings might serve to mislead the Committee, or the House of Commons, or the people of England, the hon. or right hon. and learned Gentlemen who used them knew perfectly well that they were of no avail with the people of Ireland. There was no denying the fact—and nobody did deny it—that in the cases to which reference had been made Irish Catholics, somehow, were excluded from the jury-box. "Oh," said the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, "no one questions, and no one doubts, the loyalty of the Catholics of Ireland—far be it from me to cast any imputation upon their loyalty and good faith." Well, then, what was the reason they were excluded from the jury-box?—and that they were excluded was an undeniable fact. How would the hon. and learned Gentleman solve for the Committee this riddle; would he give them any explanation? The Catholics were reliable men—the Committee were told they were honourable men and loyal men; but, notwithstanding all that, they were chased out of the jury-box, and asked to stand by, nearly every one of them, when a jury was empannelled. He put it to the hon. and learned Solicitor General and the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, whether the Irish Members had not a right to ask for an explanation of this state of things? What was the solution of the mystery—where was the key of the riddle? There must be some cause for it; it was not want of good faith; it was not want of loyalty—what was it then? He wanted to know—and he would again and again ask the question—what was the taint upon the Catholics of Ireland that they were excluded from the jury-box? Man after man of them—respectable Irish citizens, and gentlemen respected in every capacity of life—were told to stand by when their names were called; and he had a right to ask for some explanation of the circumstance. He feared there was something disingenuous in the pleas of hon. and learned — very learned — Gentlemen in this matter. There was something they dared not speak out—there was something they dared not say—in the face of the Catholics of Ireland. They did not dare to say that the Catholics were not to be believed on their oaths; they did not dare to say that they were perjurers, or to call them traitors. Then, what was it which almost invariably excluded them from the jury-box on the occasions referred to? No; the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland did not dare to say that Irish Catholics were traitors, for he knew that on that very day the blood of Irish Catholics was wet on the soil of the Soudan, spilled in the defence of this country, spilled in the performance of duties that they were sent to the Soudan to discharge, the morality of which action on the part of those whom they served he would not question at that moment. Had not the Government sent Irish Catholics to the deadly breach in the ranks of the British Army? Had not these men fought bravely, had they not given their blood, had they not died in the service of England?—and, that being so, the hon. and learned Gentleman did not dare, on the floor of that House, to tell the world and Irish Catholics in the Army and the Navy that their co-religionists at home were not to be trusted as being men whose religious faith put a barrier between them and the jury-box. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not dare to say that; but he and his Predecessors on the Treasury Bench thought they could conceal the facts of the case from Irish Catholics by glozing speeches which they made in that House. He challenged, and he dared, the hon. and learned Gentleman to tell the House and the country, and the people of Ireland, the true facts of the case. The administration of justice in Ireland was, he would not say corrupt, but partizan, although how far unfair he would not at that moment discuss. In small matters and in large matters it was thoroughly well known that no confidence could be reposed by the masses of the Irish people in the administration of justice—they had no confidence in any part of the system, from its highest to its lowest point. He had read the sentence passed at Mullingar on a man named Lawrence Kenny, who was convicted of having fired at a soldier in the darkness of the night. The prisoner might have fired a shot, or there might have been some mistake about the matter; but, at all events, he was convicted and sentenced by Mr. Justice Lawson—the mild, and gentle, and just Judge Lawson! For the offence Kenny was sentenced to penal servitude for life. Let them suppose, for a moment, that was a just sentence for such an offence; but he heard also of the case of an Orangeman who, in the North of Ireland, was convicted of having made two separate assaults in the same evening on a sentry. On the first occasion, in endeavouring to get through the gate, the Orangeman struck the sentry; and, meeting the soldier a little later, he presented a revolver at him, loaded in six chambers. The man was disarmed, and no injury was done; but what was the sentence passed on this Orangeman, who, by the way, was also a Conservative registration agent? Let the Committee observe the sentence passed on this person, who first assaulted a sentry at his post in endeavouring to force his way past him, in striking him in the face, and then in presenting a loaded revolver at him and striving to shoot him—which, probably, he would have done had he not been grappled with and disarmed. The sentence upon this man, passed in the county of Tyrone, was a fine of 10*s*. A fine of 10*s*. purged the offence of an Orange Conservative registration agent, whilst penal servitude for life was the sentence passed upon another man accused of having fired at a soldier. In the case of Kenny the soldier was not hit; there was no proof that ever he (Mr. Sullivan) could ascertain that there was a bullet in the weapon; but, at any rate, the man was convicted of the charge, and had a terrible sentence passed upon him. The Government ought to know of what sort were the Ulster magistrates, who could let off a man with a fine of 10*s*. for attempting to shoot a sentry. One of the magistrates on the Bench when the Orangeman was tried was the gentleman who had given an I O U to the stationmaster at Omagh, to pay the train fare of a party of Orangemen to Dromore to shoot down the Nationalists. That was one instance, among many, of the way justice was administered. The Irish Representatives were sent to that House to complain of such administration of justice; and he maintained that the Government had a right, if they wanted the confidence and respect of the Irish people, and if they wanted loyalty to exist in Ireland, to bring about a more satisfactory state of things. They had a right to carry out the administration of justice on a different system to that which they were at present adopting—a system based on the perjury of informers, packed juries, partizan Judges, and Orange magistrates, who had no idea of justice as between Protestant and Catholic, Orangeman and Nationalist.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am glad the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) called us to the more strict Business of the evening. The extent to which we have wandered from it may be judged from the fact that the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down gave several moments to criticism on the judgment of a Bench of unpaid Justices of the Peace, not one of whom receives one halfpenny under any Estimate or Supplementary Estimate ever brought before this House. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton referred to a debate on, I think, the Supplementary Estimates last year, or the year before, when he criticized, more minutely than he has done to-day, and in a manner that left a different impression on my mind, the expense of law charges and the criminal prosecutions in Ireland. My hon. Friend is a frequent attendant in this House when Estimates are under discussion, and those who are frequent and intelligent attendants on such occasions begin, I think, to understand some of the difficulties that Ministers in charge of these Estimates have to face in their attempts to reduce expenditure. If that is the case in regard to the Army and Navy Estimates, where the expenditure may be said, in one sense, to be absolutely in the hands of the Minister, when he is restrained very much by the criticisms which he finds regulating these Departments, and by general considerations of public advantage, how much more should it be the case in such a matter as the administration of justice, and law charges, and expense of criminal investigations in an Island, in size, not much less than England, and where these charges are very much at the mercy of officers, many of whom cannot be said to be public officers under the control of the Minister at all. Well, if my hon. Friend will compare the result of this year's work with the much vaunted reduction in the Army and Navy Estimates, he will find that something, at any rate, has been done; if my hon. Friend will examine these Estimates he will find a reduction answering to about £1,000,000 out of £12,000,000 in the Navy Estimates, which is a reduction which has very seldom been seen, but which has been seen in our time once. The Minister who makes such a reduction as that is generally allowed to take no little credit to himself for it; but most certainly any little credit that he takes is out of all proportion exceeded by the charges of cheese-paring and flint-skinning which are brought against him. If my hon. Friend will examine the Estimates he will find that there is a very substantial reduction, answering to about £1,000,000, on the Navy Estimates, and after I have pointed that out to him I will go a little further, and point out the extremely arduous and difficult circumstances under which this reduction was made. The Estimate last year was £86,000, and the Supplementary Estimate £40,000—that is to say, the total Estimate last year was £126,000. This year the Estimate is £100,000, the Supplementary Estimate is £15,000, and therefore the total Estimate for the year is £115,000, or a reduction of £11,000 on the Estimates of last year. [Mr. H. H. FOWLER dissented.] The hon. Gentleman may shake his head, but that is so.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: You only spent £118,000; that is the proportionate amount.

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes; but we still have our possible savings to make. What is the nature of the Supplementary Estimate which we are now asking for? It is one made out in consequence of an increase in certain items, of £20,000, against which we may roughly say there was a decrease of £5,000 to be set off. What was the particular item to which my hon. Friend specially directed his grievance last year? If I mistake not it was the fees to counsel. Well, Sir, this year £18,500 were voted as fees to counsel, and I am glad to say that it is specially on that item that savings have been made. Then, out of the savings of £5,000, £3,237 are due to fees to counsel. The entry of law expenses goes over a considerable number of items. There are payments to Clerks of the Crown, payments to Clerks of the Peace, payments in regard to Petty Sessions, expenses of medical witnesses, payments in respect of Crown witnesses, payments to the Crown Solicitor, and a sum of no less than £3,250 may be estimated for the expense of juries at Assizes, and for the defence of prisoners in case of murder, and miscellaneous charges and printing briefs. There are, in fact, a great many items, all of which have one and the same origin. My hon. Friend talks of the diminution of crime that is now taking place in Ireland, and he argues from that that a diminution in the cost of detecting crime ought to take place in consequence. I can well believe that that should be so; but we have not yet reached the point at which it occurs. One cause of the diminution of crime in Ireland is because the war against crime has been carried on with special vigour—and I would, at the same time, venture to say with exceptional success—[*Laughter.*]—I must beg hon. Gentlemen opposite not to interrupt me. I never interrupt them, and I must ask that I shall not be treated in this manner. We have done that in a year which has been marked, of all years in the history of our country, for the successful prosecution of a very great, and, as it was satisfactory, a very successful crime. Now, £5,000 of that increase is due to the rewards that were paid for bringing to justice the Phœnix Park murderers. [An hon. MEMBER: Paid to the informers?] I say £5,000 was paid in rewards for bringing to justice the Phœnix Park murderers. Hon. Members know perfectly well what I mean when I use that phrase. I expressed myself briefly; but hon. Members know perfectly well what I meant. The hon. Members for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and Ennis (Mr. Kenny), I think, referred to these rewards. The hon. Member for Sligo asked for details as to how this £5,000 was spent, in order that it might be known to what persons sums of money had been paid in connection with the Phœnix Park murders, and what the amounts were. Now, Sir, I must respectfully inform the hon. Member for Sligo that I cannot give him any such details. The hon. Member says that no possible danger can arise to any of these people; but there I differ with the hon. Member. I quite allow that Ireland is in a very different state, as regards danger, to that in which it was some time ago; but I cannot forget that there are several rival Associations in America which are collecting money for the purposes of murder, and collecting it by means of open subscription lists in newspapers published regularly. These subscriptions, for the purpose of promoting murder, are every whit as open and as boldly kept in the face of day as are the subscription lists of the Church Missionary Society. It is for the American Government to say whether they think that these subscription lists should or should not any longer be left open. ["Question!"] Sir, I am speaking to the Question in answer to the hon. Member for Sligo, who wanted the details as to the expenditure of this £5,000 which appears in the Supplementary Estimate; and I say I cannot give these details so long as large subscriptions are being raised by powerful organizations in America for purposes of murder, seeing that the money may be spent in procuring the assassination of witnesses who have been allowed to escape from Ireland in order to pursue their industrial occupations in other countries after giving evidence for the detection of crime in Ireland. I hope the hon. Member for Sligo will take this as a sufficient answer. The hon. Member for Sligo then comments on the difference between the large sums paid to witnesses in political cases, and the small sums that are paid to witnesses in cases that are non-political. Now, in the case of the Phœnix Park murders it is obvious that large sums were paid to witnesses in order to maintain the faith of the Government, which had offered large rewards to people contributing information which would bring the perpetrators of these murders to justice. But, in ordinary cases, a distinction has to be made between the sums that are paid to witnesses. You pay a witness in a case where he receives nothing more than his mere time for his attendance in proportion as he makes sacrifice by giving his testimony. When the poor woman, whom the hon. Member for Sligo spoke of, came to give her testimony in an ordinary case of murder, she ran no more risk than a person who happened to see a burglar get through a window of a house in London would run in giving his evidence at the Police Court to obtain the conviction of the thief; whereas some of these people to whom large sums have been paid have lost their livelihood, and have been compelled to leave the neighbourhood in which they resided; for I do not for a moment deny that there is still far more sympathy with crime than one could wish to see in some districts of Ireland. The large sums that have been paid have been purely compensation for the comforts and advantages which the people who have given their evidence have lost by their so doing. Hon. Members must remember that war against crime costs money, just as much as any other kind of war; and just think what the war against crime has been. Take merely these Dublin murders. Here is a gang of 26 persons, every man of whom has been accounted for;

there is not one of this gang of murderers who is at this moment at large except in the character of an informer, save one young man who was set at large very early in the proceedings, because it was shown that he had acted under compulsion, and without any participation in the act of murder. Hon. Members, earlier in the debate, brought charges against me, with singular vehemence, couched in language which I really think those hon. Members would hardly repeat in their cooler moments. I was charged with having tried to hang an innocent man and woman. [MR. HEALY: Hear, hear!] [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Sir, I think it would be considered very strange if an English or Welsh Member were to charge the Home Secretary with attempting to hang an innocent man, when that person had been acquitted of the murder. It is not for a person who stands in the position of the Home Secretary of a large country to be able of himself, beforehand, to say whether anyone of the hundreds of people who have to be brought to trial on grave charges ought to be so brought to trial or not. If he did attempt such a task—a task altogether beyond his powers—he would be carrying concentrated and centralized government to a point of absurdity. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) accuses me of supplying the place of a Bill suspending the Habeas Corpus, by keeping men in prison on remand; and he compares my action in that respect with the action of my Predecessor in working the Protection of Person and Property Act. I should be the last person to say anything that would put my right hon. Friend (Mr. Forster) in an invidious position; the House of Commons put him in possession of his immense powers, and it was his duty to carry them out; but I trust that no power of keeping a prisoner in prison on remand was used to supply the place of a Bill suspending the Habeas Corpus. It should be remembered that every prisoner has a right to apply to the Court of Bail; and it is not I, but the Judges, that have to decide these matters, and who keep prisoners on remand. I am responsible for nothing that concerns any trial before any Court of Justice. The Government are responsible whether or not they sent men before these Courts; but it is the Courts that have to answer, not to men so much, but to their own consciences, for what they do with the prisoners when once they get to the Court. The hon. Member for Monaghan says that in this respect I am inferior to my Predecessor, who boldly struck at great people, at Members of Parliament, and formidable men; but that I only struck at humble peasants. Well, Sir, I do not know how the hon. Member for Monaghan reconciles that with the fact that he spent not a small section of his speech in a description of his own sufferings in gaol, where he was certainly not placed during the *régime* of my right hon. Predecessor. I say that to bring it as a charge against the present Government that they struck at humble peasants is very strange indeed. Those we have been defending in the action which has been lately taken were the rich and the powerful? Who were the victims of the Lough Mask tragedy? The Joyce family belonged to the poorest of the poor, and they were Catholics; and when you tell us that we are murdering Catholics, I reply that the very first acquittal for murder was a Catholic peasant. Religion does not enter into the matter at all. Our only anxiety is to make the lives of Her Majesty's Protestant and Catholic subjects safe in Ireland, and I think we have succeeded. Hon. Members call the Prevention of Crime Act a "murder machine;" but, Sir, before that Act was passed, there were 51 murders alone that were undetected and unpunished. In the first nine months of 1882 there were 26 murders of an agrarian and a political nature; and during the past six months, as my hon. Friend has said, there has only been one throughout the whole of Ireland.

MR. PARNELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman, while dealing with the statistics as to the number of murders committed, give the details showing the number of murders detected?

MR. TREVELYAN: I should have liked to have received Notice of that question being raised earlier in the debate. The hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) is, I know, very familiar with these statistics, because he went into them very closely at the time of the passing of the Prevention of Crime Act; and, therefore, he may draw an interesting conclusion from this—that on examining the statistics I find that in the past three months, out of 96 serious cases in which prisoners had been made amenable, 64 had been convicted and 32 had been acquitted. The statistics of agrarian crime, upon which we based the change in the Jury Law, which formed the most important part of the Prevention of Crime Act, for the past three months show that there have been two murders dealt with, though not committed during the period, and in the case of one there was an acquittal, and in the case of the other a conviction. That, Sir, is the result produced by this expenditure. I have looked into the matter very closely this year; I shall look into it more closely next year; and if a reduction on the full amount, as large as has been made this year, can be made next, I shall be very well satisfied. I think the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) underrates the English expenditure. As far as I can make out, while the amount for Ireland is £115,000, that for England amounts to £276,000. [Mr. H. H. Fowler: Those are the figures of the Government.] I beg pardon—I was going on to say that the discrepancy quite justifies the hon. Member's anxiety, and, I allow, quite justifies the public-spirited form in which he reflected on the inadequacy of our efforts—for all human efforts are inadequate—to reduce the sum in the course of a single year. The result of this Estimate is a thing which I keenly value. In the suppression of crime it is possible that hardships have resulted to individuals. Well, these hardships I deeply regret; but they have not been hardships inflicted from any animus against the people. The Irish Government earnestly and sincerely endeavours to detect the guilty, and earnestly and sincerely endeavours to render innocence secure—[*Laughter from the Irish Members.*] Well, I know there are hon. Members here who have already gone much too far on this question in another direction willingly to accept that as other than an unfounded boast; but I still believe that the general opinion of the country is that in this matter the Government have sincerely done their duty.

Mr. GORST said, that a stranger listening to the speeches delivered on both sides of the House would not have had the slightest idea that the Committee were engaged in the somewhat dry process of discussing Supplementary Estimates. He did not blame hon. Members who represented Irish constituencies for the warmth they had indulged in that evening; because now that the Rules of the House rendered it almost impossible for questions of vital importance to be brought before the consideration of the House, Members were compelled to take every opportunity they could get, even on the Supplementary Estimates, in bringing forward matters in which they were interested, and which they were shut out from introducing to the notice of the House on more legitimate occasions. The few remarks he wished to make would be as to the aspect of this Vote as a Supplementary Estimate. He wished to make a complaint of the mode in which the Civil Service Estimates were presented to the Committee by the officers of the Irish Government. He was glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place. They had not been favoured, during the course of the discussion this evening generally, by the presence of a Cabinet Minister; but he was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer was present, because he would be able to bear out what he (Mr. Gorst) was about to say. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had complained of the extravagance of the Vote for Irish law expenses; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had answered him by saying that the Irish Government was engaged in a war with crime, and that a war with crime, like all other wars, must be a costly proceeding. That was very true; but just because it was a costly proceeding it was likely that the expenditure would not be regular. An expenditure of this kind, whether against crime or against a foreign enemy, should be properly presented in the accounts. When the Supplementary Estimates were presented it was usual to give some explanation of the reason why the sums asked for were not included in the regular Estimates; and if any hon. Member would look at the English Supplementary Estimates he would see that invariably there was some explanation given, more or less satisfactory, of the reason why the particular sum asked for was not asked for when the Estimates were before the Committee last year. In every single case in the English Estimates such information was supplied; but in the Irish Estimates information of this kind was not vouchsafed. He took a particular Estimate now before the House—and what he was about to say applied equally to last year. He would take one of the Irish Supplementary Estimates. Well, the Government did not condescend to inform the Committee why it was that this particular sum was not asked for in the Estimates of last year. Surely it was quite obvious to Members of the Committee that it was very inconvenient to have Irish Supplementary Estimates at all, because their effect was simply to double debates. It would be convenient, both for the Government and the House of Commons, if the money wanted were voted once for all, and there was no necessity for application to be made for a Supplementary Estimate. Take the Vote, General Law Expenses. The original Estimate was £15,000, the Irish Executive now came and asked for £10,000 more, without the slightest syllable of a reason being given why the original Estimate was not for £25,000. In the Estimate there was given what was facetiously called details; but those details consisted simply of a repetition of the original item. The item was "General Law Expenses," and the details were "General Law Expenses, under Estimate." Was that under Estimate the fault of the officer who made the Estimate—was it an under Estimate because of some circumstances that had come to the knowledge of the Irish Government since the original Estimate, or why was it an under Estimate? He was not saying the item to which he referred was wrong; but his contention was that the House of Commons was entitled to be furnished with information upon this subject before it was asked to vote Supplementary Estimates. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his contention was not perfectly sound and right? As to the second item of rewards for information leading to the detection of crime, the details stated that the rewards had not been included in the original Estimate. Why had they not been included in the original Estimate? [MR. TREVELYAN: Because we did not know then.] If that were so, why was it not stated? The crimes had been detected, the criminals had been brought to justice, before the Estimates were laid before the House; and what he contended for was that specially in connection with this Irish expenditure where there was a war going on against crime—a war in which the expenditure of large sums was necessary—the officers of the Irish Executive should not be allowed to come to the Committee asking for enormous Supplementary Estimates, without, at least, condescending to give information as to the causes that led to these Estimates not being known and laid before the Committee when the original Estimates were prepared. That was a reasonable contention, which, no doubt, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit; and he (Mr. Gorst) thought they ought to have some explanation from the officers of the Irish Government, as to why the universal practice in connection with English and Scotch Estimates was not followed in this case.

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Of course, it was not within his intention to suggest that Her Majesty's Government could have been guilty of the meanness of cheating even the informers; but, still, they had this fact—that there was only £5,000 mentioned for paying rewards in the case of the Phœnix Park murders, when certainly something like £20,000 was advertised in the Irish papers to be given for the discovery of these crimes. The Chief Secretary, however, also by way of illustrating, presumably, his peculiar relations with the country which he was sent to govern, devoted most of his attention to answering the very reasonable and business-like criticism of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). [An hon. MEMBER: He did not answer it.] At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman devoted a great part of his time to what purported to be an answer to the hon. Member. He recognized the justice of the correction. The right hon. Gentleman's excuse for not dealing with the Irish objection was contained in the passing reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Sullivan), who had called attention to the extraordinary circumstances under which a Conservative registration agent, an Orangeman, had been let off with the bagatelle of a 10*s.* fine for assaulting a sentry and threatening to shoot him with a loaded revolver. The Chief Secretary was unable to see the bearing of that fact on the present discussion. Part of their objection to this law expenditure was that if expenditure on legal procedure in Ireland was laid out on proper objects, it would not amount to its present total; and the result in regard to public satisfaction and public peace would be very different. However, that was the sort of administration of the law which prevailed in Ireland. Such crimes as those committed by the Orangemen—attempts to shoot a sentry and brandishing revolvers—were allowed to pass without notice, while vast sums of money were demanded from the taxpayers for legal expenditure upon very indifferent classes of offence. He did not intend to refer to the £5,000 voted in regard to the Phœnix Park informers any further; but it was most remarkable that there was first a general Estimate for law expenses put down at £10,000; then, by way of a Supplementary Estimate, there was another £10,000. What system of estimating expenses was that? Assuredly, if any English Minister were to estimate the expenses of his Department at a certain figure, and then come and say he had made a mistake, and the expenses were exactly double his Estimate, he would hardly be considered a successful administrator. To judge, however, by the applause which greeted the right hon. Gentleman, he was regarded as an exceedingly successful English administrator of Irish affairs. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) recently stated that a good many of the objections raised by Irish Members were objections upon which English Members were not competent to form an opinion; but, unfortunately, it was the opinion of English Members which would decide upon the objections of Irish Members to these Estimates. All the efforts of Members on this side of the House or on the other side to extract from the Government information in detail on the matters covered by this Estimate for legal expenditure had totally failed; for, instead of giving an explanation, the Chief Secretary had wandered off into references to matters which were not dealt with at any length on any side of the House. He begged the Chief Secretary, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the Secretary to the Treasury, if any of those functionaries would condescend to reply to Irish Members, even at that late hour of the discussion, to give some information in detail, as to what matters, or what particular trials, this £20,000 had been expended upon. He did not believe any explanation could be given which could, for an instant, bear even the well-intentioned and good-natured criticism of English supporters of the Government. He would venture himself to offer an explanation of the reasons of these vast and vague sums which the taxpayers were asked to pay towards the Law Officers and the legal expenditure of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland. This additional £10,000 squandered without explanation formed part of the system of Bar bribery in Ireland. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had contrasted the lavish expenditure on law in Ireland, considering the population of less than 5,000,000, as the British Government now put it with pride—for, thanks to the operations of Her Majesty's Government, the population had sunk to below 5,000,000—with the sum required for the administration of law among the 25,000,000 or 27,000,000 of people in England; but the hon. Member had not made due allowance for the very different character of the work which had to be done by English law administrators and Irish law administrators. After all, English law administrators were paid, to a certain extent, by the consciousness that they were carrying out an honourable function in the State; while it was too well known in Ireland that Irish barristers could only be induced to support the administration of English law in Ireland by being paid a certain something over and above what would be required by the administrators of honourable functions; and that the work of coaching informers, and changing venues, and packing juries, and similar unclean operations of English Governments in Ireland, required to be compensated at a higher rate than the administration of ordinary law in a free country. That was the reason of the reticence observed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He did not wish to admit that the extravagant rate of pay given to the supporters of the Crown in Ireland represented compensation for the character of the work the administrators of the law were called upon to perform in Ireland. If they had not the present Chief Secretary, doubtless they would have another right hon. Gentleman, until the good day came when, he trusted, they would be able to get rid of all those right hon. Gentlemen root, stock, and branch. He was only referring to the present Chief Secretary as an algebraic quantity. The right hon. Gentleman might be Chief Secretary X for all he cared, and any criticisms he passed upon any portion of the right hon. Gentleman's administration only applied to him in his character as a functionary of the Government. Of course, he would not enter into the question of how an English freeman, a lover of liberty, could accept any consideration for functions which the Chief Secretary must perform in Ireland. Objections had been raised in this debate to the practice of jury-packing in Ireland; and the Representatives of the Government denied to-day, as they had denied every day since the present Administration came into Office, that jury-packing existed in Ireland; but, despite those denials, everybody on both sides of the House was perfectly well aware that jury-packing did exist in Ireland, and that without it British law could not be administered in Ireland. Objections had also been raised respecting the constant change of venues which occurred whenever the Government were not quite certain, even with jury-packing, of obtaining a verdict to its taste. He considered that there was no portion of the administration of law in Ireland that was more thoroughly vitiated than that which was affected by these changes of venue. No portion of the administration of the law operated more unfairly towards the poor; no portion of the administration of the law acted more unfairly towards the weak and helpless, than these changes of venue at the discretion of the Attorney General for Ireland. However, of course, the Government had an answer. Crime diminished in Ireland just as population diminished, and the Government counted on the approval of the House so long as those two satisfactory facts went together. The Chief Secretary was encouraged in his refusal to give any information by the knowledge of the fact that information could no longer be forced from the Government. Among the results of the changes introduced in the constitution of that House, there was none more disastrous than this—that a Ministry, with a majority at their back, could actually refuse any kind of satisfaction to the most reasonable demands of the minority; and sooner or later the time would come—and they had it in their power to make it sooner—when they would be able to insist on a Vote being taken. Explanation or no explanation, they would get their money, and the Representatives of the taxpayers would get no satisfaction. He had only risen to enter his formal protest against the manner in which public money was squandered upon the maintenance of an evil and tyrannical system in his country. Beyond that formal protest, words could have no weight whatsoever; and he only trusted that as these scenes were repeated; as the inefficacy and the uselessness of appealing to a Government supported by a majority became more clearly impressed on the Irish nation, both at home and abroad, the Irish nation at home and abroad would become more and more determined to substitute a more efficient form of pressure for the useless method of discussion in a Parliament utterly and entirely at the mercy of the Ministry of the day.

MR. DEASY said, that, of all the extraordinary speeches delivered from the Treasury Bench that evening, no speech had surprised him more than that of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was appealed to by an hon. Member below the Gangway to give some explanation of the very heavy expenditure in Ireland ; but he had not done so. If the right hon. Gentleman had given an explanation, it would have been, he ventured to state, that the greater part of the expenditure occurred under the head of Secret Service money in Ireland, because there could be no doubt that Secret Service money gave rise to the most abominable crime of perjury, and that by that means a large amount of crime was placed before the House year after year. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) got up, to his surprise, to defend the Ministry; but instead of doing so he devoted the greater part of his speech to lecturing the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), and made no defence of the Ministry, except that he thought the Solicitor General for Ireland had met the case of jury-packing, which was the main indictment of Irish Members against the Government. That charge had not been met; and as one of the Members for Cork, where jury-packing had been practised to an alarming extent, he would take that opportunity of expressing his strongest dissent from the denial of the Solicitor General for Ireland with respect to that charge. In support of his statement he would take the liberty of citing a few cases tried at the last Winter Assizes, and give the constitution of the juries which tried those cases. On the 14th of December a man named Timothy Curtin was charged with having maimed some cattle, the property of his brother, and he pleaded guilty to the indictment. The Attorney General for Ireland, who, according to the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, never excluded Roman Catholics from the jury-box on account of their religion, challenged 23 jurors. Of those 23, 22 were Roman Catholics, and the jury was ultimately composed of five Protestants, and the remainder were Catholics. On the 16th of December a man named Casey was charged with having attacked a dwelling house in August last. The Attorney General for Ireland challenged four jurors who were Catholics, and the jury was composed of nine Protestants and three Catholic magistrates, one of whom had signed the Rossmore protest, and was, to all intents aad purposes, an Orangeman of the deepest dye, and one of the most anti-Irish of all Irishmen. On the 17th of December seven men were indicted with conspiracy to murder. Thirty-three Catholics were challenged and five Protestants. Two were considered Liberal members of the Corporation of Cork; but there was never a greater mistake, for they were no more Liberals than he was, but because they occasionally voted with the Nationalists and were not Protestants they were excluded from the jury. The jury ultimately consisted of eight Protestants and four Catholics. On the 27th of December John Murphy was charged with the murder of Thomas Spencer, and the jury was composed of eight Protestants and four Catholics; but 39 Catholics had been challenged and ordered to stand aside as unworthy of belief on their oath. Five Protestants, most of whom were engaged on trials, and who had formed part of a jury which either acquitted prisoners or disagreed as to returning a verdict, were not allowed to serve again. On the 31st of December a second case of murder was tried, the prisoner being Thomas Quinlan. Nineteen jurors were told to stand aside, all of whom were Catholics; but one Catholic served on that jury—namely, the foreman, a gentleman who had signed the Rossmore Protest, and was an avowed Orangeman. On the same day another man was indicted, and 34 Catholics were told to stand aside and three Protestants, the jury being composed of 10 Protestants and two Catholics, one of the Catholics, Captain Fagan, having been foreman of the last jury. On January 1 two Catholics and 10 Protestants were sworn in the jury-box, and one of the two Catholics was again Captain Fagan. On the 2nd of January the fifth murder case was tried. Fifteen Catholics were challenged and four Protestants; the jury consisted of 10 Protestants and two Catholics, the latter being two magistrates who had served on almost every jury on charges of murder. On January 2 a jury was composed of seven Catholics and five Protestants; but the case did not come under the Prevention of Crime Act, which accounted for the extraordinarily high number of Catholics. He had little more to add, except that the people of Cork believed in the charge which the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had brought against the Government, of attempting, whether knowingly or not, to convict and hang innocent men ; and so long as this system of jury-packing went on, so long would it be impossible for them to have any confidence in the law, which was so essential to the public welfare. He himself had had the advantage of being told to stand aside over and over again by the Crown Solicitor; and his constituents, in appreciation of that gentleman's action, had sent him there to expose this injustice. He hoped that the Solicitor General, now that he saw that the statement he had made was misleading, and not in accordance with the facts, would give some undertaking that in future he would not pack juries, and would acknowledge his mistake, and not attempt to mislead the House any more.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it was only reasonable that before the Committee consented to pass this Vote they should receive some information as to why there was this item of £10,000 for general law expenses at all. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had asked the Chief Secretary some time ago to explain the fact; and when the Chief Secretary rose to address the Committee he expressed satisfaction at the question having been put. But he no more answered that question than he answered any other question that had been put to him. He went off at a tangent, and talked about the Army and Navy Estimates; and then he discoursed on the attitude of the American Government with regard to the advertisements issued in America; but when he came to deal with the criticisms of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton he carefully abstained from giving any information whatever on the point urged upon him. The hon. Member had brought to the attention of the Committee the fact that the original Estimate had been increased by £10,000, and he referrred to the original Estimate last year as having been £12,000, upon which a similar Supplementary Estimate was last year proposed of £10,000. He asked why it was that with a diminution of crime so great—the Solicitor General for Ireland had stated that there had been only one murder in six months—and the rest of the crime of the country was very slight indeed, chiefly composed of threatening letters, most of which could hardly be seriously regarded, the other items of the Vote having been so much reduced that the Chief Secretary took credit for the reduction—this particular item showed such an increase? What the Committee, he thought, might fairly ask the Chief Secretary to state was, what were the causes of expenditure under this particular item? How was it that, with an original Estimate of £12,000 last year, a Supplementary Vote of £10,000 was required? What were the sources of expenditure in the present year, and how was it this additional £10,000 was required, when there was a reduction under every other item? To him this appeared perfectly inexplicable. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had asked for an explanation, and the Chief Secretary, having expressed his intention to give an explanation, sat down without doing so.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he had given the explanation in outline which the hon. Member asked for; but he would give the hon. Member the items of these sub-heads which made up the general item of law expenses. The first sub-head was that of Clerks of the Crown, £4,300 voted, and probably £6,000 had been spent. Then came Clerks of the Peace (fees for prosecutions carried on throughout Ireland), £1,500 voted, and £2,000 spent; medical assistance, £1,000 voted, £3,000 spent; expenses of Crown Solicitors on special duty, £875 voted, £2,000 probably spent; Crown witnesses, £750 voted, £3,000 probably spent; expenses of jurors, £440 voted, £900 spent; miscellaneous charges, £5,679 voted, £11,670 probably spent; and one or two other items which had also been exceeded. The miscellaneous charges were all of a very minute character, and were chiefly composed of car-hiring, postage stamps, telegrams, &c. The expenses of shorthand writers, employed on compensation cases, formed a large part of the item, and amounted to about £822. The miscellaneous expenditure under Sub-head G, again, was due to the very large number of law proceedings taking place throughout the country. The Government hoped that the diminution of crime, to which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy) had referred, would tell next year upon this Estimate. It was the widespread efforts to bring criminals to account that had caused the general expenditure which the Committee was now asked to grant. The money asked for was absolutely necessary, in order to bring about the diminution of crime which had occurred. Although there was an increase of nearly £15,000, against it there was a set-off in the way of savings on almost every other item. Having stated the way in which the account was made up, he trusted that hon. Members opposite, although they might not approve the expenditure itself, would allow the Vote to be taken.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that if the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman was unsatisfactory, his mode of stating it was still more so. The sum now asked for was £15,000. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that that sum did not cover what was to go to the item G. The mode of calculation adopted by the right hon. Gentleman precluded the possibility of arriving at a clear idea of the Vote. He (Mr. A. O'Connor) objected that on the Vote, as presented to the House, there was nothing to show that £5,000 was appropriated to this sub-head over and above the sum now asked for.

Mr. HEALY asked who could have gathered that the expenses under the Prevention of Crime Act were included under this sub-head? He charged the Government with having attempted to lead Members astray, and prevent discussion, by concealing what it was that the sub-head covered. In order to conceal from the Committee what the investigations under the Prevention of Crime Act cost, they were lumped under the head of Law Expenses. The Government knew how strongly Irish Members objected to some of these items, and for the purpose of throwing dust in their eyes they had been lumped together in this manner. Had it not been so late, he would have called attention, at greater length, to the fact that in every case where an Orangeman injured a Catholic the Government refused compensation. He understood, however, that some compensation had been given in the case of Maguire, of Cavan; but for that he had to thank not the Government, but the kind spirit of the Prime Minister. Why was not the man who had his eye put out, and the other man who had a bullet driven into his lungs, to have some compensation? If there was no obligation imposed by the Prevention of Crime Act on Lord Spencer to give compensation when an Orangeman killed a Catholic, why did not the Government bring in an Amending Bill to give compensation in cases of that kind? Irish Members might be asked why they did not bring in a Bill for the purpose? The answer was, that they did not want to go into any law expenses whatever; and they said that the Government ought to have some means of escaping out of the dilemma of refusing compensation to Catholics who were murdered by Orangemen. It was hardly fair that Lord Spencer should award £5 to a policeman who had his thumb scratched, and refuse all compensation when the eyes of Catholics were put out by Orangemen. The Government must see that the law was defective. Then let it be amended. They had heard a great deal of the extraordinary number of murders and outrages committed in Ireland. But what did they find when they were reduced to figures and represented in hard cash? According to the Return, which, of course, was not yet printed, the number would be found to be comparatively small. The Government had represented to the House that the whole country was reeking with blood, in order to get the Prevention of Crime Act passed. Why, there were more people killed in England in one year than were killed in Ireland in three years, and that during a crisis which the Prime Minister had described as a state of social revolution. In Ireland, in three years, they had had 73 persons injured, while in England there had probably been 700. They found that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had given £20,000 to the families of murdered persons, and about £27,000 to persons injured, while the Grand Juries had given a comparatively moderate amount. Lord Spencer sat alone at Dublin Castle; he knew nothing whatever of the character of the localities on which he placed the blood tax; but the Grand Jury knew that it was upon their tenants that they were levying the tax, and that if they put on too much the tenants would not be able to pay their rents. His opinion was that the Government found this tax impossible to collect; and he himself had refused a levy of 1*d.* in the pound which had been made upon him for the attack on Mr. Field. It would be hardly worth while for the Government to proceed to execution upon his goods and chattels for the amount of 2*s.* 10*d.* He hoped that the citizens of Dublin would act in the same way.

MR. BIGGAR said, the Chief Secretary having stated that he was not responsible for these law charges in their preliminary stage, he (Mr. Biggar) would ask who was responsible? On the assumption that the lawyers were not responsible, they should not be at liberty to make any expense they pleased; they should not, for instance, be allowed to engage several counsel in cases where one junior would be sufficient. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would use his influence in his official capacity against the manufacture of law costs in Ireland, he believed that a considerable saving would be effected. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not responsible, it was hard to say who was, because he was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who stood at the head of the direction of the affairs of the country. Both the right hon. Gentleman and the noble Earl were Members of the Privy Council in Ireland, from which directions emanated for the administration of justice. He appealed to Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to take the right hon. Gentleman in hand, and try to make some impression upon him, to limit the manufacture of law charges in Ireland. Then the right hon. Gentleman said he was not responsible for jury-packing in Ireland; that it was not in his Department. But he (Mr. Biggar) always thought, if the Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland jointly would give instructions to the Law Officers of the Crown that no jury-packing was to take place, it would soon be put a stop to, for some time to come, at all events. It had been proved to demonstration, although right hon. Gentlemen said they did not believe it, that jury-packing had taken place in the City of Cork in the most unblushing manner. The Solicitor General for Ireland had told the Committee that, so long as he was in the position of Law Officer of the Crown, he would never take part in the packing of juries. But, unfortunately, the hon. and learned Gentleman was in this position. He had given certain pledges to the electors of Derry, which, as far as he could form an opinion, the hon. and learned Gentleman had failed to carry out. Now, if the pledges given were only of equal value with those which he had made in that House, he was rather inclined to fear that jury-packing must again take place at some not very distant day under the guidance and direction of the Solicitor General. The Chief Secretary had said, on behalf of the Irish Executive, that justice should be administered, and that innocent people should not suffer. Well, there were some cases of a very marked character—those of Hynes and Walsh; and the right hon. Gentleman had himself referred to the case of the murderers of the Joyce family. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether justice had been done in those cases? The right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the conviction of the prisoners; because if the Lord Lieutenant and the right hon. Gentleman found that the evidence was not sufficient, it was their duty to have suspended execution, and not allow these people to be hanged. Then there was the case of J. Poole, in which a most unprofessional thing occurred. The Judge who presided over that trial was, he believed, counsel in the case before he was raised to the Bench. He asked, what would be thought of such a proceeding in England? That was an illustration, amongst many, of the way in which so-called justice was administered in Ireland; and he thought the Government should be ashamed of the system which, if it was not their interest, it was their duty to amend.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he had hoped to hear some reply to the remarkable facts which had been brought to the notice of the Committee by the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Deasy). He had never been more surprised than by that remarkable statement, which he hoped was appreciated by English Members. They had been told that the jury panel was so formed that only a small percentage of Roman Catholics came to the trials; and he wanted to hear how that extraordinary state of things came about. It was idle to tell them of the honour of this or that official—no doubt they were all honourable men. He granted all the virtues which were heaped on the heads of these people; but let the Government explain to Irish Members how it came about that out of the vast majority of Roman Catholics in Ireland only one or two were to be found on any jury, while the rest of the jury was taken from the Protestant minority. Then, and not until the country had been shown this, he would say there was no jury-packing in Ireland. In the meantime, he maintained that jury-packing did exist. If the Government held that the Catholic population were not to be trusted with the administration of justice, it was an admission that they had no trust in the honour or loyalty of the great majority of the people of Ireland. He would much rather the Chief Secretary rose in his place and declared manfully, if that were his opinion, that he did not believe in the honour and loyalty of the Catholic population. The present system was nothing but a juggle; he did not know how it was done, nor who was to blame; but there were the facts looking them in the face. The Chief Secretary seemed to have argued that he was not responsible for the arrangement of juries in Ireland. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman did not, in his heart, approve the system; but in that House Irish Members held him responsible for every single detail of the administration of the law in Ireland; and, that being so, they should hold him responsible for this system of jury-packing as long as it continued to exist.

Mr. MAYNE said, that strong as was the case put by the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Deasy) with regard to jury-packing the case of the City of Dublin was much stronger. The jury panel in the City of Dublin showed the proportion of Catholics to Protestants to be rather more than as four and a-half to one. When the 200 special jurors were summoned, the panel, if they were indifferently summoned, would consist of, say, 153 Catholics to about 47 Protestants. If such a panel had been gone through in each of the trials of the Mayo prisoners a very different result would have followed. There would have been a very large proportion of Catholics, and a very small number of Protestants; but they found, on the contrary, from the actual figures, that the number of Protestants serving on the seven juries would represent about double the number that ought to be on a panel of 200. They found that there were 47 Protestants out of the 56 jurymen who tried the seven cases. That state of things was brought about by Catholics being ordered to stand aside. These were plain statements of fact, and could not be dismissed by mere denials, such as they were accustomed to hear when this question was raised in the House of Commons. What took place could not be the result of accident. He knew that, with respect to five of the juries in question, 149 Catholics were ordered to stand aside. On the first jury 23 Catholics were ordered to stand aside before the necessary number of Protestant jurors were obtained; on the second, 20; on the third, 26; on the fourth, 13; and on the last jury 15 jurors were ordered to stand aside, most of whom were Catholics. Now, that was a statement of facts which the Government were bound to answer, and they could not meet it by simply giving a good character to the Attorney General for Ireland; nor did the excellent character which the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) gave to the Law Officers of the Crown all round in any way meet the case. The facts and figures must be faced by a promise seriously given in that House, and faithfully adhered to, of abandoning this wretched practice of jury-packing in Ireland.

Mr. BIGGAR, who was met with cries of "Oh, oh!" said, hon. Gentlemen opposite did not seem to know that it was perfectly competent for an hon. Member to speak as often as he chose in Committee. What he rose to say was that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, ought to accept the challenge of his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary (Mr. Mayne), because, if they did not, they would allow judgment to go by default. A specific charge of deliberate jury-packing was brought against the Government of which they were Representatives, yet they had not the manliness to stand up and deny the imputation, nor had they the good grace to make a declaration that if jury-packing had taken place in the past they would pledge themselves that they would do what they could to prevent it happening in the future. If the Chief Secretary and the Solicitor General would so pledge themselves it might be the means of causing him and his hon. Friends to cease to draw attention to the system of jury-packing—a system which was bringing great discredit upon the Government. Before he sat down he would draw attention to a case which was recently tried, because it showed very clearly the manner in which justice was administered in Ireland. A man named Matthews was convicted of setting fire to a wooden hut occupied by a number of persons; but the man was only sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. Now, if the offence had been committed by one of the National Party, instead of by a member of the pet Party of the Lord Lieutenant—namely, the Orange Party—the sentence, instead of being nine months' imprisonment, would have been penal servitude for life; and, in his opinion, penal servitude for life was not too severe a punishment to inflict upon any man who deliberately set fire, in the middle of the night, to a house, the inhabitants of which ran, as in this case, a great risk of being burnt to death. But the Judges were Members of the Privy Council; they came in direct contact with the Lord Lieutenant, and the Lord Lieutenant liked to play into the hands of the Orange faction. The result was that for any offence committed by an Orangeman only a nominal punishment was meted out; whereas, if a similar offence were committed by a member of the popular Party, the severest punishment the law allowed would be inflicted upon the offender.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) denied that any juror had been set aside on account of his religion. One statement had just been made by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) which he could not allow to pass by unnoticed. That statement was that the Judges were Members of the Privy Council, and that the Lord Lieutenant consulted with them as to particular prosecutions. Nothing of the kind ever occurred. It was impossible, having regard to the constitution of the Privy Council, that such a thing could occur.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it was a curious coincidence that so many cases similar to the one he had quoted occurred. It was a strange thing that Roman Catholic jurors were from time to time set aside, and that Protestants were not challenged. It was a strange thing that first one Judge on the Irish Bench and then another happened to inflict light punishment on one class of persons, and very severe punishment on another class. Perhaps it did not arise from the cause he stated; but certainly the fact remained. Notwithstanding the general denial of the Solicitor General for Ireland, he asserted that the sentences inflicted upon adherents of the National Party had been of a most partial and unfair nature, and also that the system of jury-packing had been practised in a most unblushing and wholesale manner.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 129; Noes 18: Majority 111.—(Div. List, No. 37.)

(10.) £1,194, Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland.

Mr. SEXTON noticed the item of £1,200 for the salary of the Master of the Common Pleas Division. How was it that that salary was not provided for in the ordinary Estimates?

Mr. COURTNEY said, that formerly the salary of the Master was charged on the Consolidated Fund. The Master dying in the course of the year, the new salary was not charged upon the Consolidated Fund.

Vote *agreed to.*

(11.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,654, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

Mr. HEALY said, he had a few questions to ask with regard to the proposed discontinuance of Sub-Commissioners. Hon. Members sitting on the Irish Benches were opposed to any discontinuance until the entire work was got through. There were still a great number of cases awaiting decision. He had asked a question in relation to the County Mayo, and he was told there were 800 cases untried. And yet they were told that a number of the Sub-Commissioners were to be discontinued. If that were so, it would be a hardship upon the poor people concerned. He did not see why any Sub-Commissioners should be discontinued. Let them get through their work. If any were to be discontinued he would like to ask what would be the *personnel* of those who were to be continued? In Ulster a few of the Sub-Commissioners were Catholics. He would like to know whether it was the fact that the Catholic Sub-Commissioners were in the front row for dismissal? There were, out of some 70 Sub-Commissioners, about a dozen Catholics. He hoped the Catholic Members of the Commission were not to be the first to be dismissed. It was especially desirable that the services of the Catholic Members should be retained in Ulster, where religious feeling ran very high; the tenant farmers of that Province should receive some kind of consideration at the hands of the Government; matters should be so arranged that they would be able to put some trust in the persons who administered the Land Act. He desired also to call attention to the conduct of Mr. M'Devitt in the case of Mary Staunton. Mary Staunton, who was a tenant, could only speak a few words of English; and Mr. M'Devitt refused to hear her case because she spoke in Irish. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was, no doubt, a great linguist, yet if he were required to give evidence he would not care to give it in Latin or Greek. He (Mr. Healy) knew a few words of Irish; but he should be sorry if he had to give evidence before a Court, in a case in which interests of an important character were involved, in Irish. Last year he called the attention of the House to the case of the Irish-speaking witness at Bandon who was badgered until they made him speak in English. The man used the word fifty, but he did not mean to do so. An interpreter was called in, and it was found the witness meant thirty. Had it been a smaller numeral he had used, the Court would, no doubt, have said—"You are perjuring yourself; we dismiss the case." Mary Staunton was a tenant on an estate all the tenants on which had got very great reductions of rent. This woman, because she would not—indeed could not—speak English, had had to pay the old rent. What consolation was it to her to be told that in a few months' time she could relist her case? The Chief Secretary accepted answers from the Land Commission which, to say the least, were not satisfactory. As a matter of fact, the answers given to questions were only intended to stave hon. Members off for the time being, and not to give them satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman read out the answers which were supplied to him with all the ease in the world, as much as to say—"There, now, my boys, I have done with you." If satisfactory views of government were to prevail in the country the Chief Secretary ought to probe to the bottom all the complaints which were made. Of all unsatisfactory answers, the right hon. Gentleman's answer about Mary Staunton was the most unsatisfactory. He did not know whether it was given in ignorance; but he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should allow himself to be made a party to the system of bamboozling which was carried on by the Irish Land Commission. The right hon. Gentleman accepted the statement that the woman deceived the Land Commission; and he (Mr. Healy) was obliged to put down upon the Paper another Question. Now, his time was quite as valuable to him as the right hon. Gentleman's was to him; and he objected to being put to the trouble to write out a list of Questions, simply because the Chief Secretary would not take the trouble to get from the Land Commission a sufficient answer in the first instance. Did the right hon. Gentleman, when he was at the Admiralty, treat English Members as he now treated Irish Members? When the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and other hon. Gentlemen acquainted with naval matters, put Questions to him, he did not venture to answer in that off-hand style in which he rattled off Questions now. He knew the Chief Secretary's time was greatly taken up; he knew he was a most zealous and hard-working official; and no one in the House could but admire the extraordinary assiduity and patience with which he performed his work. He (Mr. Healy) wondered that any Englishman would take up the disgusting job of Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was amazed the right hon. Gentleman did so when he got no return for it. Certainly, the Irish Members did not thank him, and the people of this country were absolutely in ignorance as to the amount of work required of the right hon. Gentleman. It was, however, a very poor excuse to the Irish Members that the Chief Secretary was overworked. They wanted their country managed on the same principles as England was managed. If they had a Parliament of their own they would have a dozen men to do the Chief Secretary's work. The right hon. Gentleman was doing badly what it would take a dozen men to do well. Was it fair for Mr. M'Devitt to dismiss Mary Staunton's case simply because she refused to speak in any other but her native language; was it fair for Mr. M'Devitt to say that she had endeavoured to deceive the Land Commission; was it fair for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to put him (Mr. Healy) to the trouble of putting down a second Question upon the case? He never knew a more unsatisfactory body than the Land Commission. He had charged the Land Commission Court with being a corrupt Court. Mr. Justice O'Hagan was a man completely unfitted for his position, and this was what happened in the Land Court. A gentleman farmer had a demesne with a beautiful house attached. He got his rent reduced by the Land Commission. The landlord appealed, and claimed that the rent should be fixed at a higher figure. He first said the case was outside the Act; but the Head Commission said—"Oh, no; it is not outside the Act; but as we cannot decide with you on the legal point, we will raise the rent £20 or £30." What was the result? The landlord did not produce his own valuer, and his solicitor was asked in private why he did not do so. He said—"Because the landlord's valuer only valued the land at £100 a-year, while the Sub-Commissioners valued it at £130." Judge O'Hagan did not insist upon the landlord's valuer being called, but raised the rent, simply because he could not go with the landlord on the legal point. Such was the character of Mr. Justice O'Hagan. If, by any possibility in the world, Mr. Justice O'Hagan could turn a legal point in favour of the landlord he was delighted to do so; it seemed to rend his heart when he decided a point in favour of the tenant. Justice O'Hagan was a man thoroughly incapable to fill his position; he ought never to have been appointed; he had done his work badly from first to last; the Act which would have been a benefit to the tenant he had turned into an implement of torture. He had no mind of his own. He (Mr. Healy) said that with pain, because in a literary sense Judge O'Hagan like the Chief Secretary, was a very distinguished man. Some of the mos charming love poems he had ever read were written by Judge O'Hagan, just as some of the best biographies were written by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He (Mr. Healy) protested against the system of elevating men simply because of their literary talents. Judge O'Hagan ought to be a man of great firmness of character. The Chief Secretary was not what they would like him. He asked the right hon. Gentleman if he thought it reasonable that Mary Staunton, a Gaelic-speaking witness, should for 12 months be saddled with a high rent because she refused to speak in English to Mr. M'Devitt?

MR. GIBSON said, he did not understand this Supplementary Estimate. The expenses of the Land Commission were becoming terrific. The salaries and allowances originally amounted to the enormous figure of £157,381, and now they were asked to vote £1,654 for additional offices sanctioned by the Treasury since the Estimate was framed. The arrears of business were very large; and he would like to know who the additional officers were, what were the allowances and pay sanctioned by the Treasury, and what the tenure was? The charge for the Land Commission for the present year, added to the Supplementary Estimate, would amount to within a few pounds of £1[illegible]0,000, which was really an increase of over £60,000 on the original Estimate made two years ago when the Land Commission started its work. When might the Committee expect a substantial diminution of the cost?

MR. KENNY said, he saw in the Estimate an item for the salary of Mr. Bell, one of the valuers of the Commission, and he wished to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that this gentleman was a person who had recently been subscribing to the Property Defence Fund in Ireland—an organization particularly offensive to the majority of the Irish people, and antagonistic to their aims and interests. What, he should like to know, would become of any Sub-Commissioner who subscribed to an equally legitimate fund, only one having different aims—namely, the fund of the National League? He should propose that the Vote be reduced by the amount of Mr. Bell's salary. It appeared that the number of the Sub-Commissioners had been reduced. In some counties there were three, whilst in other cases there was only one for five or six counties. For instance, Galway had the whole services of two Sub-Commissioners and the partial services of another, whilst in other cases several districts had only one between them. He was anxious to know whether the Sub-Commissioners were to be reduced to such an extent that the operation of the Land Commission would necessarily be retarded, and 15 years or so would be occupied—until, in fact, it was time for a new valuation—before all the cases were decided? He wished, further, to call attention to the extraordinary increase in the number of appeals. What had given rise to this increase? He would tell them. For the last six months or so—probably 12 months—the Chief Commissioners had taken upon themselves to make trifling and vexatious alterations in the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners. The only object that he could see for this vexatious increase was the further development of litigation. He knew an instance where a landlord had appealed—a landlord who happened to be a Peer—and a clear gain of something like £65 to his Lordship was the result. That was an important gain, and would, of course, more than cover the expense of the legal proceedings; and other landlords, when they saw such a thing as this, were inclined to think that it would pay them to appeal. As for the tenants, whenever decisions, in the first instance, were unsatisfactory to them they were not in a position to appeal, because they could not afford it. The result of the procrastination in disposing of cases on the one hand, and of these appeals on the other, was that the tenants had their backs broken, and the landlords could do just what they liked. If the landlords saw that they were likely to gain anything by appealing, the Committee might depend upon it that they would not lose the opportunity, and in this way the work of the Chief Commissioners would be continued for a very long period. The proceedings of the Chief Commissioners and their assistants were extremely unsatisfactory. He would not go at any length into the question now, but only just touch upon it, because he hoped to have a further opportunity of dealing with it very shortly.

MR. TREVELYAN: Several of the more serious parts of the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen resolve themselves practically on the same point, which I will refer to after I have touched on one or two small matters which have also been brought forward. I can assure the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny) that Mr. Bell's salary does not come within this Supplementary Estimate at all. This Estimate is for a large number of Sub-Commissioners, who were originally estimated for up to the 23rd of December, the time up to which the Treasury sanctioned their appointment. Afterwards they were kept on, for a very good reason, until the 31st of March, in consequence of which there was a very large addition to expenditure on salaries—an addition of some £13,000. On the other hand, there was a very large saving, principally in travelling expenses, amounting to £9,400; and the result of that is a small balance against the Estimate of £1,654. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) referred to the case of a poor woman, whom he thinks was wronged by the Sub-Commission; and he states that, in his opinion, the answer I gave to the House of Commons on that point was insufficient. Well, I can only say that the answer I gave resembled those answers which I used to give when at the Admiralty. When at the Admiralty I was obliged to answer according to the character of the Questions—whether they affected matters which were or were not within my control. When I am answering for a Department under me I never give an answer until it is perfectly satisfactory to my own mind, and also to the hon. Member who has put the Question; because I do not think it desirable to adopt a plan which induces hon. Members to put Question after Question requiring answer after answer on the same subject. It is a very different thing, however, in dealing with matters that are not connected with the Department immediately under me. Questions relating to the Land Commission would come under the latter category. We have an authoritative voice on everything that relates to the expenditure of the Commission and to the constitution of the Courts; but with the proceedings of those Courts we have nothing at all to do. I am obliged to give the answers as to the proceedings in those Courts that the Land Commissioners themselves supply me with without any comment whatever. As the Committee will remember, I had to give answers of the same class very frequently to hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite to me. When the Land Commission first sat these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen put Questions, more in a hostile than in a critical spirit, with regard to some of the judgments of the Court. I gave a general statement to the effect that the Chief Commissioners were unwilling to place before the House of Commons their reasons for the decisions they arrived at; and I must say that the statement stopped all questions of that nature coming from hon. Gentlemen immediately opposite. The questions that came from many parts of the House embodying complaints respecting the operation of these Courts are very few, and they are generally what are called leading Questions. I do not deny that if the facts as stated by the hon. Member for Monaghan are as correct as he conceives them to be—[Mr. Healy: They are not denied.]—I say if they are as correct as the hon. Member conceives them to be, I admit the case is one for fair inquiry as to the policy of the Land Commission in these matters. I made an inquiry on the subject, and I was told that their policy was to provide interpreters in cases where they were required; but in regard to the particular case referred to we must be content with the opinion the Commissioners gave, which was that, in the opinion of the Judge of First Instance, the woman was deceitful. She has her means of redress; and I am sorry that in looking for that redress she has been put to some inconvenience and loss. It is quite impossible to give any further explanation where a Judicial Body like the Land Commission state that they have given you all particulars they choose to place before the House of Commons. I now come to the more important point—the future of the Land Commission. With regard to that, I can give no definite statement whatever at this moment. I can only assure the hon. Member for Monaghan that those views with which he began his speech are as deeply impressed on my mind as it is possible for them to be. At this very moment they are engaging most of my attention and industry; and I hope the arrangement we shall ultimately arrive at will be satisfactory to the House. In framing these conclusions I was not a little guided by Questions which the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny) has put to me from time to time in regard to certain counties in which there were large arrears of cases. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) has referred to the enormous expenditure of the Land Commission. I do not propose to enter into that question at the present moment; but I can assure the Committee that the defence of that expenditure is a very simple one, and it is that the work requires all the hands employed upon it. The hon. Member and his Friends are rather apt to complain that the work is scamped rather than the reverse. Nor is it contended in any part of the House that those employed in performing the work are paid too highly; at least, I never heard that statement made; and if these two conditions are admitted, then the cost of the Land Commission can only be reduced by the work being done. The great stress of this work is rapidly approaching completion. The originating notices and the work connected with them are not so advanced as we could wish; but they will be so far advanced that there will be found to be in connection with them a large reduction in next year's Estimates. I can promise the Committee that that reduction shall not be caused at the cost of rapidity of proceeding with the arrears of work. The entire sum spent on the Land Commission up to the 31st of March of this year is £321,000. That is a very large sum, but it is less than some exaggerated Estimates that have been put forward; and whatever the value of the work that is done the amount of it cannot be denied.

Mr. GIBSON desired to know whether the right hon. Gentleman could tell him the cost to each Sub-Commission of the additional officials for the payment of whose salaries the Vote was asked? He should also like to know what contribution those who used the Courts made towards their maintenance?

Mr. SEXTON said, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary amounted to an elaborate statement to the effect that he could tell the Committee nothing at all. Two large questions were put before him—the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had pressed for some information on a certain point, but without obtaining it; and the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had raised a point as to the incidence of expenditure and the course to be pursued by the Commission for the future; but the right hon. Gentleman had been unable to give any explanation. He should have thought the right hon. Gentleman, at the close of his speech, would have proposed to postpone the Vote until he was in possession of information.

Mr. TREVELYAN: Information upon what point?

Mr. SEXTON: As to the general expenditure of the Land Commission, and the amount contributed by those who make use of the Court. Is the right hon. Gentleman able to give any reply?

Mr. GIBSON said, he would repeat his question later on.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the Irish Members, in their attempt to obtain information, were confronted by an impassable barrier — the Secret Service money was an open and frank affair compared with the Land Commission. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Questions put in the House concerning the Land Commission were very often "leading Questions." What did he mean? Why, that the Questions were so firmly based on fact that, if frankly entertained, they admitted of but one reply, which reply, being inconvenient to the Government, they always refused to give. How had this woman, who had been cheated by a person under the circumstances detailed by the hon. Member for Monaghan, been treated? The right hon. Gentleman refused to give the Committee any information about it. He had told them the Government had some authority over the action of the Land Commissioners in certain matters, but that in other matters they had no control over them at all; and he (Mr. Sexton) had met the right hon. Gentleman by the statement that where they had a controlling voice they had outraged public feeling in Ireland. He had mentioned to the right hon. Gentleman the notorious and scandalous case of Mr. Eyre Preston, a gentleman who, it was said, had been 38 years connected with the administration of the Land Laws, but who, when the matter was looked into, was found to have only been a kind of amateur casual, an investigator of tithe rent-charge, at one time dismissed from the Public Service for causes which, to say the least of it, reflected no credit on him. This gentleman had had the insolence, at a moment when public passion was excited in Ireland — when there was danger of civil war in Ulster —in order to render the state of things worse than it was, to allow his name to be appended to the Manifesto lauding Lord Rossmore. Mr. Eyre Preston was called upon to resign; he sent in his resignation; but at the point where the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and Lord Spencer had the final power they intervened, and overbore the judgment of the Land Commissioners, retaining the official in his office on account of his mendacious writings in *The Daily Express.* He should like to know why Mr. Eyre Preston had been retained in his office —at any rate, he should move that the Vote be reduced by £300, the amount of this gentleman's salary; and if he were unsuccessful—as he expected he would be—he would move the same reduction on every Vote in which the Land Commission was concerned. He did not consider the discussion of such matters as these could be satisfactorily carried on at that hour of the morning; but he and his Friends were determined to exert themselves to the utmost to bring the Land Commissioners to a full account for their conduct. He should have to ask the Government why the Land Commissioners had refused, with something not far short of rudeness, to inquire into the conduct of the Mr. Bell, a Court Valuer, who had subscribed to the Property Defence Association? This individual, whose word was final, whose function was to be impartial between the landlord and tenant, in the ardour of his landlord sympathies had subscribed £2 to an Association whose *raison d'être* was the purchase of the cattle and produce of rack-renting and vindictive landlords. With what decency could this gentleman be retained in his position, the first requirement of which was, at least, a pretence to impartiality? He must say that the hon. Member for

Monaghan need be in no sense surprised that he received answers evasive and incomplete from the Chief Secretary. The wonder to him (Mr. Sexton) was that the hon. Member received any answers at all. This Land Commission retired under the veil of its privileges—hid itself under its official obscurity; but the Irish Members were determined to bring it out into the light. If they had any influence at all, it would be exerted in the endeavour, on this and every possible occasion, to extract information from the Government in regard to these matters. But could the hon. Member for Monaghan wonder that he failed to extract information when so high an official as the Comptroller and Auditor General had been entertained, when he asked for information, with a flat and rude refusal? This official pointed out that the Commission had spent £120,000 under the Act of 1881; and he asked them to satisfy him that the conditions of the Act had been complied with. He was, however, met with a flat refusal. He declared that he had been unable to audit the sum of £120,000, and to say whether it had been properly expended, because the Land Commission had refused to give him the necessary information. On these several points—the expenditure of the Land Commission, its receipts from those who had taken cases before it, the conduct of Mr. Eyre Preston, the conduct of Mr. Bell, and the refusal of the Commissioners to give information to the Comptroller and Auditor General, and because he was sure, from his experience of debates of this kind, that no satisfactory explanation would be given to the Committee—he would move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member bases his Motion on the ground that satisfactory answers are not given. He began by saying that the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) had asked me two questions which I was not able to answer. I was able to answer them, and I will do so directly the debate is resumed. I cannot answer to within a few shillings, but I can to within a few pounds. As to Mr. Eyre Preston, I must say I do not see how he comes within this Supplementary Estimate, as his salary is not included in any one of the Votes; but if the Committee will allow me to strain a point I shall be glad to give an answer to the hon. Gentleman. If he will withdraw his Motion I will answer him.

MR. HEALY said, that, seeing the length of time they had been sitting, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was a very proper one. Perhaps his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo would withdraw his Motion now; and then if, later on, they could not get satisfactory information from the Government, they might ask for a postponement of the Vote. There were several Votes which could be taken after this, which was one of great importance, and one which, probably, the Government would do well to postpone.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I trust the hon. Member will withdraw his Motion, to enable my right hon. Friend to give him the information he desires.

MR. SEXTON: I should like an explanation given.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): We cannot give it you on the Motion for reporting Progress.

MR. SEXTON said, he was stating the terms on which he was disposed to withdraw the Motion. If the right hon. Gentleman would give them the best explanation he could as to Mr. Eyre Preston, and the extraordinary withholding of information from the Comptroller and Auditor General, he should be inclined to withdraw the Motion, on condition that the Government would take up the discussion again on Report.

MR. PARNELL said, he certainly thought the time had come for reporting Progress, if not on this, at least on some other contentious Vote later on. There were three other Irish Votes to be considered, two of which were not contentious, but the third of which was exceedingly so. He should think the best course would be for the Government to withdraw the present Vote and proceed with the Estimates, on the understanding that when a contentious Vote was reached it should be postponed, or Progress should be reported.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am not sure whether, on the Motion before the Committee, I shall be in Order in making a statement I desire to lay before the House in regard to Public Business; but probably I shall be allowed to make the statement, seeing that it very largely refers to the impropriety of reporting Progress soon. What I wish to explain to the Committee is the position in which we stand with regard to Supply. I think I shall be able to show that the position in which we stand is one that will require us to devote a great deal of time to the finishing of the Supplementary Estimates to-day and to-morrow evening. The position is this. The Army and Navy Estimates must be taken on Monday and Thursday next, and even then they will be taken at a later time in the Session than they ever have been during the past 10 years. The Committee are, doubtless, aware that there are what may be called financial formalities—or, at any rate, formalities under our Constitutional financial law—which it is absolutely necessary to go through before the end of the financial year; and I am afraid that even if the Army and Navy Estimates are taken next Monday and Thursday it will be necessary to sit on Saturday week. That being the case, it is absolutely necessary that the Supplementary Estimates should be finished before Monday, and we have between now and Monday only to-morrow; and Friday not being a day in the possession of the Government, although Supply may be put down, it may be intercepted by a number of Motions before we can go into Supply, and so the time available for the discussion of the Estimates may be very short indeed. If we should not get through the greater part of these Votes to-night, and if it should be impossible to-morrow to complete them, the only course will be to devote a Saturday to them. Some hon. Members will be inconvenienced by that, and to us who are in Office it will be very inconvenient. Still, that is a course which has been taken before, and if it has been taken before it may be taken again; but I wish the Committee to be under no mistake in the matter. The whole of the Supplementary Estimates must absolutely, in compliance with the requirements of the law, be finished before the Army Estimates are taken by Monday, and the proposal I should like to make to the Committee is this—We have to-night devoted considerable time almost exclusively to the Irish Votes; and I hope the Committee will not object to finishing the Irish Votes to-night. There are then remaining a number of Votes which are not Irish Votes, but which relate to the United Kingdom generally. Of these Votes a large number are practically unopposed—that is to say, the discussion upon them could not be very long; but there are four which will, I understand, take considerable time to discuss. One of these is the Vote for the Diplomatic Service; the second is for the Suez Canal; the third is a Vote for a Grant-in-Aid of expenditure in certain Colonies; and the fourth is the Vote for South Africa. What I propose to do is to take the whole of the remaining Votes except these four to-night, and then to try to finish these four to-morrow. I am bound to say that I think it is not very likely that we shall have time to-morrow to finish them, but we will try; and if we do not get through them we propose to devote Saturday to finishing them. I think that proposal is not unreasonable—to take these four Votes to-morrow, if we can do so, or on Saturday, if to-morrow is not sufficient. That is the proposal which the Government makes. It is the best proposal they can make, having in view the absolute necessity of finishing the work of Supply in a reasonable time.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he presumed that if it was in Order for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make the statement which had just been allowed, it would be in Order for any hon. Member to offer some remarks upon it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman was in Order in stating the reasons why he thought it not desirable to make Progress.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR presumed, therefore, that any hon. Member would be equally in Order in commenting on that statement. If not, he should wish to know why? He had on several occasions witnessed a similar performance to that which the Committee had just seen. Year after year the Prime Minister, or the Minister who took his place for the occasion, had risen and told the Committee that it was absolutely necessary that these Votes should be passed by a certain date. Every year he had asked why, and every year an explanation had been refused. He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman would find it easy to explain why it was absolutely necessary that these Votes should be taken by the particular date he mentioned. There was one explanation only, and that was that the Government, having chosen to put down other things on other days, were resolved not to display these items for an examination of the financial affairs to be made. The right hon. Gentleman said he was exceedingly anxious that the Committee should understand the position in which they were. The Committee was, after all, only a secondary matter; the country was much more important. It was just as well that the country should understand the situation; and this was the situation—they were now being asked to vote in Supplementary Estimates sums in aid of Votes which were taken, absolutely without discussion, towards the end of last Session. The items were brought down when hon. Members had been sitting many months, and were tired, and on the top of that it was proposed that the Votes should be taken *pro formâ*, and all observations reserved for the Report stage. Those who had any recollection of the history of the House in its dealings with the public purse——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now exceeding the proper limits.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was sorry if he had travelled further afield than the right hon. Gentleman had; but it seemed to him that if the right hon. Gentleman was justified in explaining the situation he should be justified in pointing out how that explanation was altogether inadequate and misleading. What was done with these Votes? They were passed absolutely without discussion; and now the right hon. Gentleman stated that of the Votes which remained in these Supplementary Estimates there were some that could be passed, as a matter of course, without any discussion. He admitted that four were important; but he omitted altogether to mention the Post Office Vote, and that was one of the largest of all the Votes. Certainly, the Post Office Service required the largest sum the Committee were called upon to vote; but there were other Votes that called for observation. Why did the right hon. Gentleman not refer to the Civil Service Contingent Fund? It was frivolous for the right hon. Gentleman to say these Votes must absolutely be passed, and that it would be impossible to meet the requirements of the situation if they did not pass them that night, some to-morrow, and some on Saturday. There was no absolute necessity; and he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to explain in detail why every day to the end of March must be given up to Supply.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The hon. Member challenges me to give details, which I have no objection to give, and which have been given before. I will do my best again. The last day on which it would be possible that the Royal Assent should be given to the Ways and Means Bill is Friday, the 28th of this month. [Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Why?] Because a very large number of transactions have to be passed through the Treasury, and it is absolutely necessary that the Treasury should have one clear day before the last day of the month to complete these transactions. They cannot do that work on Sunday; and, therefore, Friday, the 28th, is the last day when the Royal Assent can be given. Wednesday and Thursday will be required to pass the Ways and Means through the House of Lords; and the third reading of that Bill will, therefore, have to be given in this House on the Tuesday. The Committee stage of the Bill must be taken on Monday, and the Report of Supply will have to be taken on Friday. The last Vote in Supply must thus be taken on Thursday next. The Army Estimates will be taken on Monday next, and that leaves only till Saturday week to take the Supplementary Estimates. Now I have answered the hon. Gentleman, and I hope my answer is satisfactory.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT presumed the right hon. Gentleman did not mean that it was absolutely necessary on Monday to take the Vote for the Army, or on Thursday the Vote for the Navy. The Vote for the men was all that was required, so that the Mutiny Act might be passed. The Vote for money need not be taken on Monday or Thursday.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): What I said is strictly correct. The Vote for the men and the Vote for the money must be taken, for the Army on Monday next, and for the Navy on Thursday next; and those two days are the latest days on which the Votes for money, either for the Army or the Navy, have ever been taken, and are three days later than the time when such Votes have been taken during the last 10 years.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Surely it is not the money that is required.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Why? I always understood that the object was to pass the Mutiny Act.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The Mutiny—now called Army—Act does not expire until the 30th of April; and there is, therefore, no necessity to pass that at present. The necessity is to pass the Votes, in order to bring in the Ways and Means Bill, and pass it by the end of the financial year. The Army and Navy Votes have never been taken as late as they will be this year.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the Chancellor of Exchequer had explained pretty clearly that these Votes must be taken by Saturday; but, that being so, he would ask why he did not bring them in before? It was reducing them to a perfect farce if they were only brought in one or two days before it was absolutely necessary to pass them; and then the Committee were told that they must sit up till 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I will answer that question with the greatest ease. The only Government days since the beginning of the Session, which were not devoted to the Speech from the Throne and the Vote of Censure, have been devoted to the Supplementary Estimates, except the days which were devoted to the introduction of the Representation of the People Bill. The Government have not taken a single day during the present Session, except for the Supplementary Estimates and for the Representation of the People Bill. [An hon. MEMBER: Two days.] Yes; but that was not our fault. But, whether that was so or not, I stated to the Committee what was absolutely correct—namely, that we have devoted every day in our power to these Votes.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the matter amounted to this—that the time of the House had been occupied in order to bring in the Representation of the People Bill considerably earlier than the Bill of 1866 was introduced, and the House had thus been precluded from giving a fair examination to the Supplementary Estimates. He did not wish, at that hour of the night, to comment on this state of affairs—perhaps he should find another opportunity of doing so—but what they now had to deal with was the position in which they were placed; and, looking to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which, they might fairly assume, represented that position accurately, so far as he was concerned—and he thought he might speak for his hon. Friends near him—the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was not unfair. The four Votes the right hon. Gentleman was ready to postpone were Votes on which he and others would wish to address the Committee. It was absurd at 2 o'clock in the morning to attempt to do that; and therefore it was reasonable that Votes of that nature should be postponed until a day when they could be discussed. That day might be to-morrow, if the Government would exercise their influence with certain hon. Members who had leading places on the Paper to induce them to withdraw their Notices of Motion, so that the House might get into Supply at once. If that could not be done, a Saturday Sitting, bad as it would be, would be better than discussing these Votes at that hour.

MR. PARNELL said, the proposition of the right hon. Baronet was a very nice one, so far as the right hon. Baronet and his Party were concerned; but there was one important Irish Vote which he and his Friends would feel justified in not allowing to proceed at that hour—namely, Vote 31, referring to County Court officers in Ireland. There was a question in reference to that Vote which they certainly could not discuss at that time of night; and although the Front Treasury Bench might fancy they had arranged everything with the Front Opposition Bench, by giving the Opposition an opportunity of discussing those four Votes they only desired to discuss for Party purposes, and that they would force Vote 31, he would tell both the Front Benches that their calculations would be mistaken, and that the Irish Members would endeavour to secure a discussion on Vote 31. The arrangement between the two Front Benches would not avail them, and the Irish Members would occupy their due share of to-morrow night in discussions upon questions of public importance to Ireland. They would not feel themselves bound by the arrangement between the Front Benches, which the right hon. Baronet had suggested with regard to Motions which might stand on the Paper for to-morrow night. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained the reasons why the Supplementary Estimates were put down so late. It appeared to him that the proper course to pursue would be to hold a Saturday Sitting, in the event of Supply not being reached sufficiently early to-morrow night to allow the discussion to take place on Vote 31, which Irish Members desired to discuss, and on the four Votes which the Front Opposition Bench wished to discuss.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The hon. Member has stated that there must be considerable discussion on Vote 31, and I am quite prepared to make this proposal—not to take Vote 31 to-night, but after the other four Votes which are to be postponed. If we can take it to-morrow after these Votes we will do so. If we cannot finish them and Vote 31 to-morrow, then we must have a Saturday Sitting. I think that is a fair proposal; and if the hon. Member will assist us to get through the remaining Votes we will do our best with those who have Notices on the Paper for to-morrow to induce them to postpone their Motions, so that we may have as much of to-morrow as possible.

MR. ONSLOW asked the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) whether, if there was a Saturday Sitting, he would promise that no other Government Business would be taken than the Supplementary Estimates? The House had often on Saturdays found a mine sprung upon them, Bills being put down which they did not expect, not only by the Government, but by private Members, who had taken every advantage of the opportunity. He did not complain particularly of this Government, for the same thing had been done by the last Government. He had always objected to Saturday Sittings unless for some specific object; and matters should not be slipped in on Saturday which Members did not wish to stop to discuss.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There will not be any difficulty in giving an undertaking that the Government would give no encouragement—though the matter is not absolutely in their power—that no Business other than the Supplementary Estimates shall be taken on Saturday; and I am quite prepared to give the same undertaking with regard to Government Business, with one exception. Either the Prime Minister or I will have to-morrow to make some statement as to the course it is proposed to take with regard to a Bill in which Members on both sides of the House take great interest—namely, the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill. It might be found convenient, if a Saturday Sitting is held, to take the second reading of that Bill on that day. In that event we might propose to go on with the second reading; but we shall endeavour to arrange that in accordance with the wishes of the House; and certainly no other Business will be proposed.

MR. HEALY said, the Government would find that they could not go on as they proposed to-morrow, for the Irish Members would put down Motions to make that impossible; and, therefore, there must be a Saturday Sitting. The Government, it seemed, proposed to take the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill on Saturday; but how could they do that after half-past 12? As far as he could see, there was no chance of the four Votes being got through before that time. He would invite the noble Marquess to abandon the idea of a Saturday Sitting; and what he would suggest was that these Votes should, in any case, go over till Saturday. The Government might as well make terms with the Irish Party. They could not come on to-morrow, because, of course, these Motions would last a long time. His hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had given Notice of a Motion, which would require some discussion, respecting the death of a man in prison. That being the position, he thought the House might as well adjourn the whole thing to Saturday, because they were now only wrangling, and would get no further forward, and two hours hence they would find that they might just as well have surrendered at 2 o'clock. He would advise the Government to get rid of this vision of their Bill being taken on Saturday. The Conservative Party might be anxious for it; but there would be a good deal of discussion on the exclusion of Irish cattle from English markets. The better plan now was to report Progress, and take the Votes in their proper order on Saturday. There must be a Saturday Sitting, for the four Votes could not be taken to-morrow, unless the Tory Party preferred to go on with them now.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, nobody could be more anxious to see progress made with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill than he; but he fancied there would be considerable difficulty in taking that Bill on Saturday. He thought some Gentlemen on his side, who were anxious for a discussion on that measure, had already left town under the impression that it could not possibly come on till Monday; and after what the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had said, he thought there could be no benefit in putting it down for Saturday. If a Saturday Sitting was to be held, which he still hoped might be avoided, nothing more than the Estimates should be taken.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): We shall only take the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill on Saturday, if that is agreeable to hon. Gentlemen opposite who are interested in the Bill. My noble Friend only mentioned that as a reservation when he was asked to pledge the Government to no other Business. All I can say now is that to-morrow, when the House meets, we will state distinctly whether that Bill will appear on the Paper for Saturday; and if there is, as there appears to be, an unwillingness on the opposite side to have that Bill taken, I think it may be taken for granted that that Bill will not be taken. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) made a proposal as to a particular Vote to which I assented. I think we must adhere to that arrangement, and try to get Supply to-morrow, and do our best with those who have Motions for to-morrow. If we fail to-morrow to complete Supply, we will complete Supply on Saturday.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was a very fair one; but the noble Marquess had complicated matters by introducing a subject which was obnoxious to Irish Members. He asked whether the intention was to proceed with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill on Saturday or not?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had only put forward the suggestion as one which would meet the convenience of the House; but as it appeared that to take the Bill on Saturday would only lead to complication, he was willing to say that the Government would make some other arrangement.

MR. WARTON said, their first duty was to give time for a proper discussion of the Estimates. Three days had already been taken up with other matters, that ought to have been given to the Estimates.

MR. SEXTON asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HEALY said, in addition to the information asked for by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), he desired to have some explanation with regard to the appeal cases before the Irish Land Court. Out of 13,784 cases, 4,500 had been disposed of, leaving about 9,000 which remained to be heard. The Irish Land Commission had been established three years, and it would take, at the rate they were deciding the cases, three years more to finish the appeals, and that was not taking into account the appeals which would accumulate upon the subsequent work of the Land Commission. Had it entered into the calculations of the Government to settle a plan by which they could deal with the question of appeals? There were a number of Judges in Ireland who had absolutely nothing to do but to spend their Long Vacation in the manner most pleasant to themselves; and he did not see why the Judges in Ireland should not be turned out to deal with this matter of appeal. He believed that no Judge on the Bench could be less fitted for the work than Mr. Justice O'Hagan. He would rather see Mr. Justice O'Brien at the head of the Land Commission; and he did not see why a short Bill should not be brought in to enable the Government to get the other Judges to decide the land cases now pending, otherwise the tenants would have to wait four or five years to know how they stood. He entirely disputed Mr. Justice O'Hagan's law, that an adequate rent was the yearly rent; besides which Mr. Justice O'Hagan had no mind of his own, and a Judge in his position ought to be able to make up his mind upon the questions that came before him. He trusted that some statement would be forthcoming to show what the Government intended to do in this matter of appeal cases.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the hon. Member had hardly a right to demand from the Government an answer to his question on a Vote in Committee of Supply. The question of appeals was, perhaps, more difficult to deal with than any other part of the Land Question, although there were larger elements in the latter than the question of appeals. At present, he had reason to believe that an Amending Bill, such as the hon. Member proposed, would meet with very strong opposition. If the Government thought otherwise they would only be too glad to introduce an Amending Bill.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(12.) £18,000, Dublin Metropolitan Police.

MR. MAYNE said, it was extraordinary that the original Estimate should have been so far wide of the mark as to render necessary a Supplementary Estimate of £4,000 for pensions and compensation to a number of worn-out police officers. It appeared that 100 men had been added to the Dublin Police Force. It was difficult to understand how such a large increase of the force should be necessary, unless, perhaps, a fact which had come to his knowledge would explain it. He found there were certain members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police at present watching the proceedings of one of the Dublin branches of the Irish National League every time they met. The men employed on this useless service were five in all—namely, two constables in civilians' clothes, as well as a sergeant and two constables in uniform. Surely, if the constables in Dublin were so numerous that five men could be spared for this purpose, a very strong case would have to be made out that additional men were wanted in Dublin. He was sufficiently well acquainted with the working of the branch of the National League referred to, to know that it was perfectly honest and straightforward, and that the officers who were engaged in watching its proceedings were engaged in a wild-goose chase. The fact might, perhaps, be explained by stating that the branch in question was one of the most successful branches of the National League in Dublin. The constables did not go into the room where the meeting was held, but remained at the door, and took particular note of the members and their friends as they passed in and out, with the object, no doubt, of deterring them from attending the meetings. If that were so, he thought they might regard it as a testimony to the success of the branch. However that might be, the presence of five members of the Dublin Police Force on the absurd duty he had described went a long way to show that the charge of £5,000 for an additional 100 men was unnecessary. Then, again, the charge of £1,710 was an excessive sum for the clothing and equipment of 100 constables. Would the right hon. Gentleman say that £17 was required to provide the outfit of a policeman for one year? Next, there was the item of £8,000 for Protection Duty and Constables in Aid, over and above what was paid for pensions. The pensions alone were £4,000 more than the amount charged in the original Estimate under that head, and the money would have paid a very large number of additional men. He was quite at a loss to understand where all these pensioners came from. Had the Police Force become worn out to such an extraordinary extent in one year that it was necessary to pay this largely increased sum for pensions? He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would throw some light on these questions.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the explanation which the hon. Member asked for was certainly not uncalled for, because there was undoubtedly an unusually large difference between the Estimate and the money really required. The difference of £4,000 in the item for pensions was the result of the action of the Act of last year. In the first place, a considerable number of officers and men had been waiting as long as they could to get the better terms which they thought they would be able to get under that Act; in the second place, there had been a certain number of compulsory retirements; thirdly, there had been a change in the force, and several officers had availed themselves of the opportunity offered them of going out. The retirements included three superintendents, and a large number of sergeants and sub-constables. These men were of long service and quite worn out, two superintendents having served 45 years, and the others for periods of 30 or 40 years. The large item of £8,000 for Protection Duty and Constables in Aid over the original Estimate was due to the disturbed state of Dublin early in the last financial year, when the Marines were sent there, and constables were very strongly needed.

Vote *agreed to.*

(13.) £2,110, Prisons, Ireland.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, this Vote was for the Escort and Conveyance of Prisoners to Trial. A few days ago he had placed on the Paper an inquiry addressed to the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland with reference to this very subject, pointing out the difference between the law in England and that which obtained in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman admitted the difference; but he said it was an accidental deviation in the case of the Irish Act, and expressed his desire to see the law of the two countries assimilated. He gathered that the Government did not propose to bring in a measure to effect that assimilation; but he would ask whether, in the event of a Bill for that purpose being introduced by a private Member, it would receive the support of the Government? Having failed to receive an answer to this very simple question, he begged to give Notice that he should place a Motion on the Paper on going into Committee of Supply next Saturday, which he felt sure would produce a reply.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the question of the hon. Member was a very serious one, and he was not in a position to answer it off-hand.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he recognized the difficulty of the subject, and that it was scarcely in Order to ask for an immediate and categorical answer. He pointed out that the assimilation of English to Irish law in this respect would result in this unfairness—that the money charged on Irish counties, and which the English counties, under similar circumstances, had not been called upon to pay, went into the British Exchequer, the English ratepayers benefiting in this way from Isish money. If, then, the Government assimilated the English to the Irish law, Ireland would have no redress. He should raise the question to-morrow on Report.

Vote *agreed to.*

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(14.) £335, London University.

(15.) £2,000, South Wales University College.

Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services.

(16.) £1,000, Consular Services.

(17.) £5,485, Suppression of the Slave Trade.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he was unable to understand how the charge of £4,510, on account of the Aden and Zanzibar Steam Service Subsidy, could fairly be comprised in this Vote.

An hon. Member asked, if the Committee were to understand that this Vote had been brought into the Supplementary Estimates under its present heading because it had been left out of the place which it regularly occupied in the Post Office Vote?

Mr. COURTNEY said, there was a note appended to the original Estimate showing that the Estimate referred to a service of a temporary character. The contract for the Mail had been advertised, and tenders were sent in for the first part of the financial year, and this Supplementary Estimate made up the service for the rest of the year.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, there were, no doubt, many charges in other Votes which had been placed there on similar grounds. He hoped the subject would be considered, and the Vote placed amongst the Post Office Contracts.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE pointed out that the benefit of the service went to the suppression of the Slave Trade—not to the Postal Service.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT: Then, in future, the Vote will come under the heading of Suppression of the Slave Trade?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes; under the Estimate.

Vote *agreed to.*

(18.) £1,207, Tonnage Bounties, &c. and Liberated African Department.

(19.) £8,000, Subsidy to Castle Mail Packets Company.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought this was the first time the Vote appeared in the Estimates, and he trusted the Committee would have some explanation on the subject from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. He remembered that there was a question of establishing the service when he was at the Colonial Office; but there were difficulties as to the amount of subsidy to be given, as well as some doubt of the usefulness of the service. So far as he was aware, no contract had been laid upon the Table of the House with regard to the service in question; and, therefore, he considered that some information should be given before the Vote was passed.

MR. COURTNEY said, that these contracts were only laid on the Table of the House after the commencement of the financial year. The Service had been approved by the Treasury, as well as by the Colonial Office, and other Departments.

MR. WHITLEY: Was there any contract or agreement for this?

MR. COURTNEY: No. There was a temporary arrangement.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(20.) £4,200, Superannuations and Retired Allowances.

MR. HEALY said, he saw amongst the details of this Supplementary Vote the item "Public Offices in Ireland, Local Government Board, £1,000." What did it mean; who was getting superannuated? The Committee ought to know who was going to retire before providing the sum.

MR. COURTNEY said, he was afraid he could not give the names of the persons who came in for these particular pensions.

MR. HEALY said, it looked like a lump sum.

MR. COURTNEY said, the money was granted in the ordinary course to gentlemen who came in under the Superannuation Acts.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he hoped that after this Vote was disposed of the Government would agree to report Progress. ["No, no!"] Then, he should most certainly oppose almost every item of the "Repayments to the Civil Contingencies Fund." As to the Post Office Vote, the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), who took great interest in the matter, had left the House some time ago, under the impression that the Vote was too important to take at that hour of the night. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had assumed that the Government would not press the Vote on the Committee.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(21.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £7,020, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."

MR. WARTON begged to move to report Progress. ["Oh, oh!"] It was all very well for hon. Members to groan; but, however objectionable his course might be, it was, to his mind, far worse to neglect the Business of the country. The Government had chosen to bring forward their Reform Bill and their Grand Committee scheme to the neglect of the vital interests and Business of the country. There were some very serious items in the Vote before the Committee on which many hon. Members, no doubt, would wish to make observations. It was scandalous that the Government, knowing the necessities of the case, should have avoided dealing with these questions for so long, and should have now come forward in an attempt to scurry through the real Business of the House. He should persist in his Motion were there 20,000 persons groaning around him. The Post Office Vote would come next. Last year that Vote was scurried through, just as the Government seemed determined upon scamping the

Estimates now. The Postmaster General was not in his place when it was taken.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Warton.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): If there was anything understood a little time ago, it was that all these Votes except four—to which a fifth was subsequently added at the request of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)—should be disposed of to-night. As it is not by reporting Progress now that we shall shorten the Saturday Sitting that hon. Gentlemen seem so anxious for, I must oppose the Motion.

MR. WARTON said, it was obviously the duty of the Government to give time for the consideration of the Votes. Long before any arrangement, so-called, was come to in regard to the postponement of any Votes, the right hon. and learned Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had left the House, being not at all well that evening. [*Laughter.*] The Committee seemed to receive that announcement with pleasure; he (Mr. Warton) stated it with pain. There ought to be some sympathy with such a distinguished Member of the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had believed that with so many Irish Votes on the Paper there was no possibility of the Post Office Vote coming on; and he had, therefore, left the House. Under the circumstances, seeing that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was so anxious to discuss the Post Office Vote, it would only be fair to postpone it.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he hoped the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would withdraw his Motion. After the Vote now before the Committee, probably the Government would consent to postpone the remainder of the Votes.

MR. WARTON said, he should be happy to withdraw his Motion if the Government would give an undertaking not to proceed with the next Vote that night. The Post Office was a most important branch of the Public Service, and——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. and learned Member that we are not discussing the Post Office Vote.

MR. WARTON: I will withdraw the Motion, which can be moved again on the Post Office Vote.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he wished to move to reduce the Vote by £1,468 9*s.* 4*d.*, two items made up in the following way:—"Fees paid on the installation of H.R.H. Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward as Knight of the Garter, £548 9*s.* 4*d.*;" and "Special Packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons, £920." As to the first of these items, it was well known that the "Garter" was not an Order given for merit, but one given to Peers whom it was wanted to bribe, and as a species of millinery to Royalty. He had no objection whatever to Royalty having the Garter—he did not care whether every Member of the House had or had not the Garter; but it was usual when the Order was given to pay certain fees, and it was with regard to these fees that he wished to make his protest. A part of them, he was told, were paid to the Dean of Windsor, or some person of that sort. Well, there was no objection to that; but what he did object to was that because a young gentleman was rewarded with the Garter, for the sole reason that he had done the world the benefit of coming into it, the House should be called upon to pay a sum of £548 9*s.* 4*d.* The Committee, he thought, would be with him when he asked it to divide against the item. Then there was this sum of £920 for "Special Packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons." These special packets were vessels which plied between Dover and Calais. He had asked the Secretary to the Treasury to be good enough to lay on the Table of the House some details respecting the item, and the hon. Gentleman had done so. According to the Return, it appeared that the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, for going to the Continent on their own business, had cost us £166; that the Duke and Duchess of Connaught had cost us £120; the Duke and Duchess of Teck, £40; the Duke of Cambridge, £40; the Prince of Wales, £200; the Crown Princess of Germany, £80; and the Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburgh, £120. Enormous sums were spent in Royal Yachts; but, nevertheless, whenever any of Her Majesty's relatives liked to go abroad, or whenever any Royal personage connected with this country who had married into a wealthy family abroad came to England to see her relatives, a special packet was to be employed, at a cost of £40 each way, to bring her here and take her back. He had the greatest respect for these august personages—[*Laughter.*]—well, as much as he ought to have; but he could not see why, when they wanted to cross the Channel, they could not do it in the ordinary packets which plied between Dover and Calais. The House had often had an opportunity of protesting against this outrageous waste. Large sums were annually voted to Royal personages, and those sums should be made to cover the expense of their journeyings to and from the Continent. If they liked to take "special packets," by all means let them; but let them pay for them. When they went from London to Dover they sometimes took special trains; but they had not the effrontery to call on Parliament to pay for those trains. Why, then, in the name of goodness, should Parliament be called upon to pay for special packets? He saw a blush mantling the cheek of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), and he was not surprised at it. He should like to know how the hon. Member could defend this expenditure?

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £5,561 10*s.* 8*d.* be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he wished to add to the reduction a further sum.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot move a further reduction until the present Amendment has been disposed of.

MR. COURTNEY said, this was not the first time his hon. Friend had challenged a Vote of this character, nor the first time he (Mr. Courtney) had replied. Seeing the hour of the morning at which they had arrived (2.40), the hon. Member would excuse him if he were now brief in his reply. As a matter of fact, he had nothing more to say than he had said on the last occasion. Her Majesty, and the children of Her Majesty, were entitled to the use of one of the ships of the Navy——

MR. LABOUCHERE: How entitled?

MR. COURTNEY: Her Majesty is entitled to order a vessel of the Navy to take her across the Channel.

MR. LABOUCHERE: And the Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburgh?

MR. COURTNEY said, Her Majesty was entitled to the use of such a vessel for herself and her friends. A more commonplace and a much less expensive arrangement, however, was made. Special packets were employed instead of war vessels. With respect to the fees paid on the installation of the eldest son of the Prince of Wales as a Knight of the Garter, it was a matter of usage and long custom that when a Royal personage received this most noble and distinguished Order the fees incident to admission to the Brotherhood should be paid by the Government, and should not be borne by the Royal personage in question. The fees were paid in several quarters. The largest amount was £138, which was spent in providing banner, sword, crest, armorial appointments, and other things. The fees given to the Dean of Windsor amounted to £41, the Dean being the Registrar of the Order. A fee of £90 went to the Garter King, £20 was paid to Black Rod, certain small sums were given to singing boys and others.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: If one of the ships of war was ordered for the transport of the Duchess of Mecklenburgh it would never be done twice.

MR. MONK: Under what Statute are the ships of the Navy allowed to be used for the transport of Royal personages?

MR. COURTNEY: I am surprised the hon. Member should suppose these things were originated by Statute. They are far too ancient and prescriptive.

MR. ILLINGWORTH wished to point out that gentlemen were asked to undertake very important duties on behalf of the country, such as those of the Technical Commission, and the Exchequer was so miserably poor that it could not afford to pay their travelling expenses, to say nothing of remunerating them for investigations in foreign countries, such as those in connection with the textile industries. The Exchequer, however, was not too poor to pay in this extraordinary way for the carriage of Royal persons. The Secretary to the Treasury said it would be inconvenient to have a war vessel placed at the disposal of Her Majesty and her friends who came to visit her; but he had said nothing about the numerous Royal Yachts, which surely would be available for this service. He (Mr. Illingworth) was charitable enough to suppose that the hon. Member would say that none of those vessels were safe, and that, therefore, it would be a very hazardous undertaking to put on board them any of these Royal personages on a visit to Her Majesty. He must, however, protest against the miserable parsimony of the policy which, while spending money in the way specified in the Vote before the Committee, refused to remunerate gentlemen who were doing the most valuable service to the country.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, that, in view of this expenditure, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would not communicate with the authorities of the Admiralty to see if it would not be possible to substitute the Royal Yachts for these special packets in the future?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, I will make that inquiry. My impression is that the arrangement would be more costly.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR doubted whether anything would be gained by communicating with the Admiralty. The same arrangement would go on up to that time next year, and they would have a repetition of the exhibition they had had that night. They heard the ex-Radical who now sat on the Treasury Bench, with his tongue in his cheek, giving amusing details as to how money of this kind was spent. They should strengthen the hands of the Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and allow Albert Victor Christian Edward, and the other personages who had been named, to get their expenses from some other source. If it were true that Her Majesty could avail herself of the services of ships of war whenever she wanted to go to Calais, or anywhere else, an indefinite amount of expenditure might in that way be justified. The defence of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury appeared altogether unreasonable and empty. The most practical course for the Committee to adopt would be to disallow these charges, for if they did they might depend on it that such items would never be submitted to them again.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): These charges have been allowed for a long time, and the money in the present case has actually been spent; therefore, I trust the Committee will not disallow the items.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: If we do, you have plenty of money in the Exchequer.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The money for this purpose has already been spent. The same thing has occurred in regard to the other charges.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN wanted to know what control the Committee had over some of these Votes? He had heard the plea now brought forward urged time after time when the Votes were put before the Committee for their approval. Some disapproval of a Vote and some challenge of it took place, and they were told—"It is no use challenging the Vote, the money has been spent, and the item must be passed." Was not the work of the Committee, under the circumstances, a delusion? Was it not wasting the time of the Committee to ask them, as a matter of form, to vote sums of money of this kind, telling them, when they ventured to discuss the items, that the money had been spent, and that objection was too late? If discussion now was too late, why had not the Committee had the chance of discussing the expenditure in time? It was idling away time, and a sham, to ask the Committee to consider these Votes.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH wished to remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they would never overtake this Vote. Last year, and the year before, the stereotyped explanation that the Committee had just heard was given. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not allow a repetition of these extravagances. There were other Members of the Royal Family on whom the Garter would be conferred in the future, and the House had better be prepared for the contingency. The next item on the list was "Sir Edward Sullivan, Baronet, Equipage Money on appointment as Lord Chancellor of Ireland, £923 1*s.* 6*d.*" He did not see why this sum should be paid—would the Government give any explanation of it?

MR. W. H. JAMES rose to acknowledge the statement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made. He was glad that the Admiralty would be communicated with; but, at same time, he knew perfectly well that unless hon. Members signified their dissent by going into the Lobby against the Vote, nothing would be done.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: If we disallow the Vote the cash might be made up on the Treasury Bench.

MR. HEALY said, he wished to make a suggestion, which would probably be acceptable to the Government, and it was that whenever the Royal Family wanted a packet of this kind the cost should be put under the head of "Miscellaneous Irish Law Charges." He had noticed that night the alacrity with which the Radical Party strained at the gnat of expenses of Royal personages and swallowed the camel of Irish Law Charges. He congratulated the Committee upon the sudden zeal they now found in the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). They found these hon. Members objecting to these miserable twopenny-halfpenny Votes, when the real objection ought to be to the Queen and the Royal Family. If they desired to have a Queen and a Royal Family in the country—["Question!"] Yes; that hit the Radical Party rather sorely, did it not? They would like to bring Her Majesty down to an extremely small sum; but that was not outspoken enough to be rebellion. They took exception to this miserable sum of £548 9*s.* 4*d.* for Royal installation fees, because it enabled them to blow off Republican steam, and prevented them from going any further. He always remarked in the character of the Radical Members that they had just sufficient spirit to make these protests without enough logic to go the whole way. There were several other items in this Vote which had nothing whatever to do with Royalty—and here he might remark that, as he was an extremely loyal person, he did not want to say anything against the granting of £548 9*s.* 4*d.* for the installation as a Knight of the Garter of Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward, but, on the contrary, regretted that the amount was not £5,548,000 9*s.* 4*d.*, so that the attention of the country might have been more forcibly drawn to it. He wanted to know the meaning of the item of £923 1*s.* 6*d.* for "Equipage Money to Sir Edward Sullivan;" and also what was meant by "The Hon. T. H. W. Pelham, Remuneration, &c., for Municipal Charter Inquiry (Croydon), £81 15*s.* 6*d.*?" Did the Government make a present of this sum to Croydon; and, if so, why? Trouble enough was, as a rule, experienced in extracting money from the Government for archæological inquiries. Why was Croydon so fortunate?

MR. COURTNEY: The item is for the new Charter.

MR. HEALY said, there was a sum also for "Charter inquiries" in connection with Henley-on-Thames, Eastbourne, Wallasey, and Bangor; but a more important question than that was the meaning of this charge of £923 1*s.* 6*d.* for equipage money to Sir Edward Sullivan on the occasion of his appointment as Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that this Vote was only a Civil Service Contingency Fund Vote, therefore the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was of no weight at all. The money had been drawn, no doubt, from the Civil Contingency Fund, and this Vote was simply to repay the sum so drawn out. If the Committee refused to pay for the conveyances of Royal personages, no harm would come of it, because the money had been paid. They could take measures now, however, to prevent the Government repeating these payments.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, that, as had been pointed out, these charges for Royal personages were not the only items of travelling expenses. There was the item in regard to Sir Edward Sullivan. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, on his appointment, came into the receipt of a most handsome salary, and it was not too much, therefore, to expect that he should pay for his equipage himself. He could understand money being voted for the expenses of Royal personages going to and from France; but why a sum should be presented to Sir Edward Sullivan for his equipage was more than he could understand. Then they had an item of £32 13*s.* 11*d.* for the expenses of a Dublin police officer to the Continent—probably "along the blue and winding Rhine" and up "the joyous Alps." What explanation had the Government to offer of this item?

MR. KENNY said, that before the Secretary to the Treasury answered the points just raised, he wished to remark that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland received a salary of £8,000 a year for doing very little; whereas the English Lord Chancellor got only £4,000 a year, £6,000 being his salary as Speaker of the House of Lords. He (Mr. Kenny) held that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was extravagantly overpaid, his enormous salary being a relic of the old corruption of that country. Why should not Sir Edward Sullivan pay his equipage money? There was another item—"Gold watch and chain presented to Mr. A. Inglott for services rendered in bringing to justice the murderers of British subjects in the massacre of 11th June, 1882, at Alexandria." He was surprised that the Representatives of the Opposition should allow the gift of a watch and chain to the informer against Suleiman Sami to pass without protest. He had at least expected that those who had made such pathetic and eloquent speeches in defence, or in vindication, of that very much ill-used person, Suleiman Sami, would have had something to say about this item. He had not expected that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), or the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), would have allowed the opportunity to pass without discussing the matter. He should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he (Mr. Kenny) was not right in assuming that this gold watch and chain was a present to an informer who had caused the execution of a man innocent of crime?

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON said, he should like to have an explanation of the item, "Bank of British North America, Repayment of Fees paid for an extension of their Charter, £103 1*s.* 6*d.*" Why should not this Bank pay the fees in connection with its own Charter, instead of the Treasury being called upon to pay them? He saw further on, "Bank of England for preparing Exchequer Bills and Bonds, 1st January, 1879, to 31st December, 1882, £227 12*s.*" Was this payment made from year to year?

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he rose to a point of Order. He thought they were discussing the reduction of the Vote by £1,468 9*s.* 4*d.* If that Vote was rejected he should certainly take a Division against the item of £18 12*s.* 8*d.* for the "Hotel bill of the Messieurs de Lesseps during their visit to London in July, 1883, in connection with the Suez Canal negotiations." He was surprised the Government did not charge 2*s.* 6*d.* for the "boots." Then there was an item of 16*s.* for "Forage supplied for horses of the late Prince Imperial during the Zulu War," which ought to be objected to. In the meantime, however, he wished to know whether it was in Order to discuss questions over and above those in regard to which the reduction was moved?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Motion is to reduce the Vote by £1,468 9*s.* 4*d.*, which would include many of these items.

MR. COURTNEY said, that the Committee were, of course, aware that there was a Fund placed at the disposal of the Treasury for the purpose of meeting emergencies which could not be foreseen, and that all these payments had been made out of that Fund.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked what was the amount of that Fund?

MR. COURTNEY thought it was £120,000. Sometimes it was drawn upon heavily. The payment for the equipage of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was in addition to that official's salary. The item was customary; and, moreover, two or three great Officers of the State were entitled to equipage money on entering upon their Offices. As to the items mentioned in connection with Charters, they were for preliminary inquiries; and the item for the expenses of an officer of the Dublin Police Force on the Continent was one the necessity for which he very much regretted. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, after his arduous labours of last Session, had taken a brief holiday on the Continent, and he had been accompanied, for protection, by this police officer. The item was necessary, but it was very much to be regretted. The item in regard to the Bank of British North America was the result of an extension given to the Charter, in order to keep the Bank in its position until they had had time to carry out the agreement, which had been arrived at in consequence of negotiations with all the Banks for one uniform system. The Charter of the Bank was approaching its end; and as the Bank could not continue its business without a Charter it had been necessary to grant an extension. It was felt to be hard on the Bank to require it to pay the fees necessary for a merely temporary prolongation of the Charter, therefore they had been born by the Treasury. He could not give a clear and intelligible explanation of the item of £227 12*s.* 0*d.* for the Bank of England preparing Exchequer Bills and Bonds, 1st January, 1879, to 31st December, 1882. On the face of the account, however, it would appear that the expenditure had been incurred by the Bank as agent of the Government in preparing Exchequer Bills and Bonds. Why the Bank had not sent in an account from 1882 he could not say; but probably they would receive it later on, and would have to pay it.

MR. BUCHANAN called attention to the item, "Expenses connected with the trial of several persons at Sierra Leone on a charge for murder at Onitsha, River Niger, £2,273 10*s.* 4*d.*" It had been stated on a previous occasion by the Government that an Order in Council was being prepared, under which British Consuls would be able to deal with these cases occurring beyond the frontiers of the Colonies more easily and cheaply than at present. Had that Order been completed?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: This is a Foreign Office affair entirely. We have communicated with the Foreign Office, but I imagine that nothing yet has been done.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 26; Noes 45: Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 38.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he would now take objection to the item of £18 12*s.* 8*d.*, the hotel bill of the Messieurs de Lesseps during their visit to London in July, 1883. He could not understand why a charge of that kind should be put on the English people.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I think the hon. Member will see that the item should not be resisted. M. de Lesseps came over to England last year at the invitation of Her Majesty's Government. He did not ask us to pay his hotel bill; but, as we ourselves had invited him to come over, we thought we owed him the courtesy of not allowing him to be put to any expense.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: That explanation is quite sufficient.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wanted to know how it was that the sum of 16*s.* was charged for forage for the Prince Imperial's horses?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have not the least idea. I am not the Secretary of State for War, and I can, therefore, give no explanation in the matter. I can only presume that it has been found that this sum has been wrongly charged to some other officer.

MR. WARTON: Is not 16*s.* equivalent to a Napoleon?

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £102,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Expenses of the Post Office Service."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

MR. COURTNEY said, that if the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion the Vote would be postponed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CIVIL SERVICE EXCESSES.

(22.) £1,526 14*s.* 10*d.*, Civil Service Excesses.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

HYDE PARK CORNER IMPROVEMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bill to provide for the maintenance of the New Streets at Hyde Park Corner, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE and Mr. COURTNEY.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Bill with respect to compliance with Standing Orders relative to Private Bills, pursuant to the Standing Order, 19th February 1833.

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 14*th March,* 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading* —Brokers (City of London) * (24).
Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee— Greek Marriages (26).

GREEK MARRIAGES BILL.—(No 26.)

(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, in 1850 a church was built in London Wall for the Greek community. Marriages according to the rites of the Greek Church were celebrated there. In 1856 Greek residents became more permanently resident in this country, and a number of them acquired an English domicile. Doubts having been suggested as to whether in the circumstances these marriages had hitherto been perfectly legal, in 1856 these residents were advised that they should be performed before the Registrar, and that the Church should be duly licensed for the purpose. From that time down to the present moment there was no doubt whatever of the perfect legality of these marriages. The object of the Bill was to take away any doubt with regard to the marriages which were contracted previous to the year 1857. The number of these marriages was about 30. Some difficulty had been experienced by the children of these marriages, in having their legitimacy recognized in connection with monetary transactions. The Bill had passed the House of Commons unopposed.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, this Bill might no doubt be founded on very sufficient reasons, and might be one that it was proper to pass after due inquiry; but it appeared to him to be equally clear that to pass any Bill of this nature without careful inquiry, which could only be conducted by a Select Committee, would be in the highest degree dangerous and objectionable. He hoped, therefore, that the noble Earl, if the Bill was read a second time, would be willing to refer it to a Select Committee.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, he should be happy to agree to the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC EXECUTIONER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Earl COWPER, in rising to call attention to the office of public executioner; and to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they do not consider it desirable that this functionary should, for the future, be appointed, and, if necessary, removed, by one of Her Majesty's Secretaries of State? said, he thought it was unnecessary to state at any length his reasons for bringing this subject forward. They had all been disgusted at seeing certain accounts in the newspapers, not only recently, but on former occasions, with reference to the conduct of the executioner and the manner in which he performed his duties. He thought it was a very serious state of matters that the executioner was in the habit of drinking very freely, and going about public-houses and showing his implements to large crowds of people. Not only so, but when in the actual discharge of his duties the executioner seemed to be perfectly incapable of carrying them out satisfactorily. That being so, they must recognize that it was a very serious matter. He was content to rest his case on the fact that on Monday last a Coroner's jury deliberately, and after much consideration, severely censured the executioner for the clumsy performance of the execution at which he was engaged. They should be glad to know how far these accusations were true. He should probably be told that the Home Office had nothing to do with the appointment of the executioner for the reason that he was appointed by the Sheriff of each county, and that he was in fact a kind of deputy Under Sheriff. This was the very thing he complained of. He was sure that their Lordships would think, if what had been said could be proved on inquiry to be true, that the person who filled this office at the present time ought to be got rid of if, possible, and that room should be made for one who was more capable of discharging the duties. It was not, however, so far as he could make out, very easy to get rid of the present executioner. He could not imagine any position more disagreeable than that of a Sheriff at this moment. If a sentence of death was to be carried out, the Sheriff had either to employ a man who was given to drunken habits and known to be incompetent, or he would find it very difficult to get anyone else to do the duty for the sum of £10, which he understood was the sum paid. It might be very easy to get a man to undertake all the executions throughout the United Kingdom, receiving £10 each time, amounting in the aggregate to £200 or £300 a year; but it would not be an easy matter to get a man to officiate in each particular case. It was all very well to say that this practice first grew up some considerable time ago. In those days people were not so particular, and a man could be got more easily in those days to perform the duty. But now people had become more squeamish, and therefore it was that this office had fallen into the hands of a man appointed for the whole of the United Kingdom, with this disadvantage —that he was responsible to nobody, and there was great difficulty in getting rid of him. He did not think there should be any difficulty in getting a man permanently appointed for the office. He was informed that when Marwood died the public were under the impression that the Home Office had to appoint his successor. The result was that there were no fewer than 800 applicants, and out of this large number he thought it should not have been a very difficult matter to secure the appointment of a man who would carry out his duties without creating a scandal. He thought their Lordships would agree with him that after reading the recent accounts of what had taken place at several executions the scandal ought not to be allowed to occur again, and that the man who was guilty of causing it ought to be removed. They were all horrified at the idea of even the greatest criminal having to endure unnecessary sufferings or having those sufferings unnecessarily prolonged. This, however, was not the only reason. The majority of thinking men in this country, he believed, thought it was absolutely necessary for the sake of the security of life, and for the keeping down of murder, that whoever was guilty of taking life should forfeit his own. But he thought they need not disguise from themselves that they were in these days very much governed by sentiment. If there were many repetitions of such things as the heart of a man continuing to beat for 13 minutes after the drawing of the bolt an outcry and clamour might be raised for doing away with capital punishment altogether which it would be difficult to resist. The suggestion which he had to make was that the appointment of the executioner should be vested in the Home Office. In the last Act passed dealing with the subject of executions and making them private instead of public, a clause was inserted distinctly reserving the rights of the Sheriffs. But this right of appointing the hangman they would probably be only too willing to give up. Perhaps the Home Secretary might not be so willing to accept it. But it seemed to be for the public interest that he should do so.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was glad to be able to disappoint the expectation of the noble Earl in one respect. He certainly should not tell the noble Earl on behalf of the Secretary of State that the Government had nothing to do with this question. Since the noble Earl had put his Notice on the Paper Her Majesty's Government had had their attention directed to this matter, and they would certainly take it into their consideration. His noble Friend had described with perfect accuracy the manner in which the executioner was at present appointed. There was no such thing as a permanent executioner. His noble Friend was, it appeared, of opinion that if a permanent executioner was appointed such scandals as those of which they had recently read would no longer occur. He, however, was afraid that it was useless to expect that the class of men who volunteered for the post of common hangman would be men of high character, refinement, and culture, and he did not see why the Secretary of State should be more fortunate in his selection of an executioner than the Sheriffs of London. He happened to know that when the appointment was last made the Sheriffs had no less than 800 applications, and they went through these with great care, so as to secure the best qualified person. What reason was there for supposing that the Home Secretary would be more fortunate? If the appointment were transferred to the Secretary of State he would then become responsible for the manner in which each execution was performed; whereas under the present law the responsibility of seeing the sentence carried out devolved on the Sheriff, who, if he could not obtain a person to carry it out, was obliged to carry it out himself. The alteration suggested by the noble Earl would, therefore, entail a change in the whole body of the law relating to this matter. He might remind the House that, so late as 1877, when the Prisons Act was passed, the duty of carrying out the capital sentence was expressly reserved to the Sheriffs, and it was intended —he supposed for good reasons—that the local authority should be charged with carrying out the law, and not the administrative authority. The details of the cases referred to by the noble Earl had not yet been received by the Secretary of State. When received they would be carefully looked into, and the point to which the noble Earl had called attention would not be forgotten.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN) — RESULTS OF THE DEFEAT OF OSMAN DIGNA.

QUESTION.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: Before the House rises I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has anyinform ation to give to the House with reference to the Soudan?

Earl GRANVILLE: The only information I have to give is contained in the following telegram:—

> "From Major-General Sir G. Graham to the Secretary of State for War—Despatched Suakin, March 14, 3.30 p.m. (received 3.0 p.m.)—Sheikh Mahmoud Ali believes that when the news of Osman Digma's defeat of yesterday is spread among the tribes they will become peaceful, and the Berber route will become clear in about ten days."

House adjourned at half-past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 14*th March*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee* —Afghan War (Grant in Aid), Supplementary Estimate, 1883-4; Civil Services and Revenue Departments (Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4).

Resolutions [March 13] *reported.*

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Land Drainage Provisional Orders* [137].

Third Reading—National Debt* [128]; Valuation (Metropolis) Amendment* [108], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS.

AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDER NO. 149.

Standing Order No. 149 read.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, he rose to move an alteration in Standing Order 149, relating to the proceedings of Committees on Private Bills, of which he had given Notice. He proposed to add to the Standing Order, in line 3, the following words:—

> "Together with a judgment upon the case stating the reasons and facts upon which their decisions are based."

It would, perhaps, make the alteration more intelligible if he were to read the Standing Order as it now stood. It was as follows:—

> "The Chairman of the Committee shall report the Bill to the House whether the Committee shall or shall not have agreed to the Preamble or gone through the several clauses or any of them; or where the parties shall have acquainted the Committee that it is not their intention to proceed with the Bill; and when any alteration shall have been made in the Preamble of the Bill, such alteration, together with the ground of making it, shall be specially stated in the Report."

He proposed to insert his alteration after the words "any of them." There could be no doubt as to the importance of the subject to which his Amendment related. The extent of capital invested in the various public works of the country rendered it a matter of the utmost importance that in dealing with Private Bill legislation, which was a great cause of expense, the uncertainty which now existed should be removed. It was most desirable that the decisions of the House should be uniform, and that those who were engaged in the prosecution of Private Bills should know the grounds upon which the decisions of the Committees were arrived at. He might state that in one item alone, that of railways, there had been invested up to the present year an amount of capital reaching £800,000,000, and there was an annual increment upon that one class of works amounting to about £20,000,000 annually. In addition to that, if the House would consider the sum invested in canals, for navigation purposes, gas and water, and in various other public works, they would find that the amount was as much or rather more than that which was invested in railways; so that they had £1,600,000,000 of money invested in great public works with an annual increment of more than £40,000,000—all of it invested out of the savings of the people of the country. Under those circumstances, he did not think there was any subject more deserving the attention of the House than the best way of improving the practice of Parliament in regard to Private Bill legislation. No doubt, all of them felt a personal interest in protecting the Constitution and their political rights; and most of the questions which affected the construction of the public works of the country went home to them personally quite as strongly as political questions. The present mode of conducting the Private Business of the House was admitted on all hands not to be satisfactory, and Resolutions had been passed at different times with the view of bringing about a beneficial change. He thought it was the late Chairman of Committees (Mr. Raikes) who stated, in a discussion which took place last year, that the course of proceedings in reference to Private Bills was not only dilatory, but costly and uncertain. He believed the right hon. Gentleman was quite right; and the question was, how was it possible to remedy that uncertainty which he (Mr. Robertson) believed to be the great cause of the expense? No doubt the practice had improved of late years since they gave up the plan of having very large Committees. He happened to be engaged before one of those very large Committees more than 15 years ago, when the Committee was composed of about 120 Members, and when the greater part of them never used to hear the case at all, but were whipped in by the action of the agents of the parties interested, and at the end a decision was arrived at quite irrespective of the evidence which had been given. Their practice had been much changed in that respect since; they had reduced the number of the Committee first to five, and then to four; but, unfortunately, they had not changed the mode of decision. It still was "Preamble proved," or "Preamble not proved," and there was no reason given to the parties who were suitors before a Committee to show how it was they had failed, or why they had succeeded. Now, if he had a case before one of the Law Courts he got a judgment with reasons assigned for it, whether they were satisfactory reasons or not. He was able to know, if he happened to fail, on what ground he had failed, and it became a precedent to guide future action. But if he spent hundreds and thousands of pounds in endeavouring to obtain the decision of a Private Bill Committee on an important case, affecting property to the value of millions of money, he was simply told "Preamble proved," or "not proved." There was no law, and there was no precedent, and all the labour which was brought to bear upon the proceedings of the Committee failed to establish any law to guide a future decision upon the same subject, however important it might be. It was to meet such a case that he proposed an alteration of the Standing Order. It was a very simple and small change, and would interfere in no way with the custom and practice of the House, except so far as making provision for a judgment to be given. He was aware that many plans had been tried and proposed, even to the extent of taking the decision out of the House altogether and altering the constitution of the Court which would have to give the decision. He agreed, however, that that was a very difficult matter, and he doubted very much whether it would be attended by any saving of expense if it were carried out. Probably they would hear his hon. Friend the Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar) upon that point by-and-bye; therefore he would say nothing about it, further than that he believed the simple change he (Mr. Robertson) proposed would effect a valuable improvement in the conduct of their Private Business, whatever might be thought as to the propriety of constituting some other tribunal. There was one remarkable point which ought to be considered. If hon. Members would look at the Instructions given by the House to Select Committees they would find that they were upon very minute points. If it was the railway system that was affected the Committee were required to report upon such small matters as a level-crossing, and the alteration of an inclination of a road by which the gradient was made steeper; and in such cases, according to Standing Order No. 54, they had to give their reasons and the facts upon which their opinion was founded. Indeed, in a great number of comparatively small matters it would be found that Parliament did ask a Committee to assign a reason for its course of proceeding; but with reference to the Preamble of a Bill affecting property to the extent of millions of money and the interests of a large class of people, Parliament simply asked the Committee to say whether the Preamble was proved or not. Now, he did not believe that it was possible for gentlemen of higher position and culture to be interested with the duty of deciding these questions than the Chairman and Members of a Select Committee of that House. No doubt they devoted the utmost care and attention to the case laid before them, and heard with great patience everything that could be said on behalf of the different interests concerned; but if the public could have the result of that labour and care in a practical decision, stating the facts and reasons upon which the decision was founded, he thought the conclusions of a Committee would have very much more weight. Of course, he took a great deal of interest in this question, as he had been engaged in matters affecting the conduct of Private Bills before Committees of the House long before he had the honour of being a Member of it; and during that time he was able to speak from long personal experience, not only on what had been done inside the House in regard to these matters, but also out of it; and he was satisfied that if those who had charge of these Private Bills—namely, the solicitors, Parliamentary agents, and counsel—could have the labours of the Committee followed by a decision stating why the promoters of a Bill had failed, or why they had succeeded, they would be able to have their proceedings much better conducted and much more care taken in regard to them than, unfortunately, was the case under the present system of dark decisions. He also believed that if there were a decision with reasons accompanying each case, they would have young solicitors and counsel who would carefully follow all the cases together with the result of each, and a Parliamentary Committee would not be so close a tribunal as it was now. Much had been said about the extravagant fees paid to Parliamentary counsel. He believed that the counsel engaged in Private Bill Committees were men of the highest position and character, and that they were well entitled to be paid high fees; but still, at the same time, the infusion of a greater amount of competition into the same line of business would do no harm to the House or to the suitors in the Courts of the House. He quite admitted that, as far as he had been able to take the opinion of old friends who were counsel and Parliamentary agents, it was not altogether in accordance with the scheme he now proposed; but he was inclined to believe that they would rarely, if ever, get any approval of any change in the mode of legislation, or in the law, or in the practice of the law, from those who were engaged in it. He believed they would have to go rather to those who suffered from the results of the present practice than to those whose experience only induced them to resent any invasion of their interests in the present system. It was assigned also as a reason against the change that it would be very difficult to get a good Chairman to sit on a Committee hereafter upon questions of this kind. He did not admit that that would be so. From what he had seen of the Chairmen who presided over Private Bill Committees, and the patience and ability which they brought to bear upon the particular cases placed before them, he believed they would rather feel pleased and honoured by having their names connected with standard cases which might have been heard before them for weeks upon evidence of the most costly character, and with the most distinguished counsel to be found anywhere, taking part in the inquiry. He believed that the Chairman and Members of a Committee would be perfectly able to discharge their duty; to sum up every case submitted to them as judges, and to establish precedents for future legislation in regard to Private Bills. He was quite aware that there were many cases in which it would be difficult to find all the instances precisely analogous. No doubt that was true as regarded many of the facts; but there was a great similarity in most cases of the same class; and, whatever the facts might be, the principles that guided the decision ought to be the same, and the House ought to have such principles clearly stated, together with the reasons upon which the decision was given. He might add other reasons, but would not longer trespass upon the attention of the House. He was very much obliged to the House for having heard him so patiently, and he trusted that he might have directed their attention to a subject which was of very considerable importance to a large number of persons. He believed the change he suggested would be most advantageous to the conduct of the Private Business of the country; and he would appeal not only to the judgment, but to the sense of justice of the House, whether, after having spent thousands upon thousands of pounds in bringing a case before a Committee and endeavouring to obtain a decision that would guide similar cases in the future, it was not desirable that there should be something to enable the promoters of a Bill to learn why it was they had failed, or why they had succeeded. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name upon the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "them," to insert the words "Together with a Judgment on the case stating the reasons and facts upon which their decision is founded."—(*Mr. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, he thought it was almost to be regretted that his hon. Friend had not reserved his speech for the Motion of the hon. Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar), which was coming on somewhat later that evening. He was unable to assent to the conclusions contained in the Motion of his hon. Friend, any more than to some of the observations he had made. His hon. Friend stated, in the beginning of his remarks, that what he desired was that the decisions of the House should be of a character that would give general satisfaction. In that he (Sir Arthur Otway) entirely agreed; but his hon. Friend's complaint did not seem to be so much against the decisions of the tribunals of the House which now conducted its Private Business, as to the absence of reasons for those decisions. He thought he could show his hon. Friend, in a few words, that if his proposition was to have the effect he desired, it would be extremely inconvenient, because, under the present system, there was ample opportunity for ascertaining the opinions upon which the decisions of Private Bill Committees were founded. Those whose duty brought them to the House at an early hour must have observed the growing difficulty of conducting the Public and Private Business of the House. It was now the custom of the House to spend a considerable amount of time upon Private Bills; and the course proposed by his hon. Friend would so greatly extend the difficulty, that he felt certain the House, when they heard one or two of the observations he proposed to make, would hardly think the Standing Order should be amended as proposed. His hon. Friend did not concur in the wisdom of giving a judgment without assigning the grounds of that judgment. But it was not always good to give a reason. Reference had been made by his hon. Friend to the course taken by the Judges; but it must be remembered that the Judges pronounced an opinion upon matters of law, whereas the opinions of the Members of a Committee were entirely opinions as to matters of fact. At present, all such matters of fact were stated in the Preamble of a Bill—in that Preamble which his hon. Friend so much decried. The Preamble was, in point of fact, merely a statement of the facts on which the Committee were to form an opinion according to the evidence; and when the Preamble was proved, the facts so stated were adopted and verified by the Committee. His hon. Friend went further. Not content with desiring the reasons upon which the Committee might have come to a decision of which he disapproved, he was so greedy of knowledge that he actually desired to know the reasons of those who agreed with him. That he (Sir Arthur Otway) thought a most unwise desire; and he was not at all sure, if his hon. Friend heard the reasons of those who agreed with him, that he would be inclined to agree with the conclusion itself. He would point out to his hon. Friend that no harm whatever happened from the fact that there was not a statement of reasons laid before the House in regard to the decisions come to by a Committee. He would take a case in which his hon. Friend himself had been very much concerned —the case of the Wrexham, Mold, and Connah's Quay Bill. That was a case in point. His hon. Friend was, no doubt, highly dissatisfied with the decision come to by the Committee in that House, and probably regretted very much that he had not the reasons of the Chairman in order that he might have criticized them. But when the Bill went up to the other House of Parliament, there was ample opportunity afforded for hearing what those reasons were, and for considering the decision of the Committee; and, if he remembered rightly, the decision of the House of Lords was that the Bill, when it came before them, should be re-committed.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, his right hon. Friend was not quite accurate in regard to the facts of the case. The Bill commenced in the House of Lords, and it was re-committed to that House from the Commons. The decision was in favour of the Bill.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY said, that was what he wanted to point out, or rather that certain statements were made which caused the Bill to be re-committed, showing that the parties were not entirely shut out from all opportunity of ascertaining what the reasons had been. That, however, was only one case among many others, as his hon. Friend would be perfectly well aware. At present, it was competent for any hon. Member to move that a Bill be re-committed; and when that course was taken, it was customary for the Chairman to get up and explain the reasons of the Committee, although he was bound to say that the House generally confirmed the decision of the Committee. His hon. Friend, however, in such a case would learn the reasons which had induced a Committee to arrive at a particular decision. But that was not all. Supposing that his hon. Friend was not satisfied and wished to go still further, it was open for him, or for any other Member, to question the Bill upon the third reading; and although it was an unusual thing for a Bill to be thrown out on the third reading, still it was an occurrence that was not altogether impossible. He would mention a case in point. A Bill was brought in some time ago which was very important as far as the Corporation of Birmingham were concerned. That Bill passed through Committee; but on the third reading the House reversed the decision, and, on the Motion of the present Sir Robert Peel, threw out the Bill. Therefore, ample opportunity was afforded by the present system for discussing a Private Bill, and ascertaining the reasons which had guided the action of the Committee. If the proposition of his hon. Friend were carried out the conduct of Private Business would be almost impossible. It would be met with endless obstruction. Anyone who felt wronged in any way by the decision of the Chairman of a Committee would criticize the reasons assigned, would collect his friends together, and the very thing his hon. Friend had very properly deprecated—namely, Lobbying and bringing up Members at the last moment to vote for a measure, would be greatly increased. That practice, which his hon. Friend justly condemned, would only be intensified and made more mischievous. He was satisfied himself that if the proposition of his hon. Friend was adopted it would be quite impossible to conduct the Private Business of the House in a satisfactory manner. At present, there was no real grievance whatever. The House was well acquainted with the way in which Private Business was carried out, and he thought they would see that his hon. Friend was raising a grievance which did not really exist. Certainly, the way in which he proposed to remedy it was positively mischievous.

It would lead to endless discussion upon all Private Bills, the time of the House would be wasted, and no conceiveable advantage would be obtained by altering the Standing Order. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would not persevere with his Motion. On the other hand, he thought a great deal of benefit might be derived by the House if his hon. Friend would enlarge his observations from his own personal knowledge, and give the House the advantage of his experience in connection with the management of the Private Business of the House.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he hoped the hon. Member would not force the House to go into a discussion of this question, because it only touched a small portion of a large question, which could only be dealt with by a Government measure—namely, the larger question of how the Private Business of the House was to be dealt with. He would advise the hon. Gentleman to repeat his observations later on, as he thought it would be a pity to take up the time of the House now, especially in the absence of the Members of the Government, and considering the small attendance of Members in the House generally.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, that after the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he would be glad to be allowed to withdraw his Motion.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (PARK RAILWAY AND PARLIAMENT STREET IMPROVEMENT BILL).

INSTRUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he rose to move the Instruction which he had put upon the Paper with reference to the Committee upon the Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement Bill—namely,

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between Westminster and Charing Cross, either by means of a physical junction or by an interchange station."

As the House had a long discussion a few days ago upon this railway, it was not necessary that he should explain what the railway was. The House knew perfectly well the nature of the proposed scheme. On the Northern side there was to be a junction with the Metropolitan Railway; but on the Southern side the railway only ran just behind Parliament Street, and there was no connection with the Metropolitan District Railway. He thought the House would agree with him that if they could make some arrangement by which they could have this connection it would be of great advantage to the travelling public. His hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst), when the discussion was on the other day, said it would be a great advantage to a considerable number of working people who would use the railway, and especially those who wanted to get to the Strand and to the City by way of the Embankment. They would find it very disagreeable, under the present circumstances, to get out and walk 100 or 120 yards from one station to the other. Perhaps it was necessary that he should explain the meaning of the words of the Instruction which referred to a "physical junction" and an "interchange station." He understood from the promoters that it would be difficult to have a physical junction at present. That was to say, a junction of rails that would allow of an interchange of traffic. Therefore, on the assumption that an interchange, by means of a physical junction, would be inconvenient he suggested in the Instruction the alternative of an interchange station. The House would know perfectly well what that meant. It would be necessary for passengers arriving by one train to get out of the train and go to another train upon another platform; and he left it to the Committee to say whether the junction should be a physical junction or by means of an interchange station. It had been suggested to him by one or two hon. Gentlemen that perhaps this Instruction might violate some of the Standing Orders of the House; but he had found on inquiry that such was not the case. The action of the Committee, assuming that the House adopted this Instruction, would be to obtain a pledge from the promoters of this railway that they would next year introduce a Bill to make this junction between the railways that would be necessary to connect the two stations. He understood that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Dover (Major Dickson), speaking on behalf of the Metropolitan District Railway, objected to the words "between Westminster and Charing Cross," and wished the Instruction to say "between St. James' Park Station and Charing Cross." If his hon. and gallant Friend would move that as an Amendment, he was quite willing to accept it. He was told that there would be no opposition to the Instruction on the part of the promoters of the railway, and he therefore hoped that the House would assent to it. He could not conceive a proposal of a more reasonable character.

Mr. O'SHEA seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between Westminster and Charing Cross, either by means of a physical junction or by an interchange station."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Major DICKSON said, that if the new railway was to be of any service at all to the public, it was absolutely necessary that there should be a physical connection. He therefore wished to move, as an Amendment, to leave out, after the word "between," the word "Westminster," and to insert "St. James' Park Station." His hon. Friend said he had no objection to that Amendment, and therefore he (Major Dickson) would simply move it.

Question, "That the word 'Westminster' stand part of the proposed Instruction," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'St. James' Park Station' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Major DICKSON said, he had next to move the omission, after the words "Charing Cross," of the word "either," in order to insert, after the words "physical junction," the words "if practicable."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between St. James' Park Station and Charing Cross, by means of a physical junction, if practicable, or by an interchange station.

Mr. CUBITT said, he rose to move the Instruction which stood in his name—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee, to inquire to what extent the present block of traffic at Albert Gate will be affected by the proposed station there, and to make such recommendations as they may deem necessary."

He did not think there would be any opposition to it. It referred to a matter which was not considered by the House the other night. It would be in the recollection of the House that it was proposed by this Bill to have a station on the East side of Albert Gate, between Albert Gate and Hyde Park Corner. The House would be aware that the block in the traffic at that part of the West End was very great, and the locality was constantly under the supervision of the police, in order to relieve the block as much as possible. Every afternoon in the summer it was necessary to station at least four policemen at that point. It was quite clear that a railway of this kind could not have a station at Albert Gate without very much increasing the block; and he was told that the residents of the neighbourhood were greatly alarmed at the serious inconvenience they were likely to be subjected to, unless something was done to relieve it. The House was aware that certain improvements which had been made recently had widened Hyde Park Corner; but at Albert Gate the roadway was still contracted like the neck of a bottle, and there was much obstruction in regard to vehicles proceeding up the Knightsbridge Road. In moving this Instruction, his Motion was not made in a hostile spirit, but in order to guard against the inconvenience which might arise if additional traffic was thrown upon a locality already congested.

Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to inquire to what extent the present block of traffic at Albert Gate will be affected by the proposed station there, and to make such recommendations as they may deem necessary. —(*Mr. Cubitt.*)

QUESTIONS.

—o—

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—THE TENANTRY NEAR GWEEDORE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the last Donegal Quarter Sessions, when proceedings were taken by the local landlords against a large number of the Gweedore and other tenants by ejectment for non-payment of one year's rent; whether it is the fact that, under the existing County Court Rules, the costs on the tenants in these cases will be nearly equal to the amount of rent due, owing to the smallness of the holdings; whether he is aware that, though the County Court has jurisdiction in all such cases where the rent does not exceed £100 a year, and no matter how many years rent is due, the costs against the tenants are the same, no matter how small the rent, the minimum cost of a decree being £2 10*s.* 10*d.*; whether it is the fact that the fixing of the scale of costs in such cases is in the hands of the Lord Chancellor and any five County Court Judges, and that the Lord Chancellor has lately had the scale of costs in County Courts under consideration with a view to its revision; and, whether it is proposed, having regard to cases such as those of the Gweedore tenants, to reduce the costs of decrees in ejectment for non-payment of rent where the rent due is trifling in amount?

MR. TREVELYAN: Proceedings were taken against a number of tenants in this district, and from the records of the Court it appears that the amount due in each case was two years' rent. Decrees were granted in 40 cases, but on condition that there should be a stay of execution on payment into Court of one year's rent. Thirty-four out of the 40 tenants decreed made this payment and secured the stay of execution. With regard to the amount of costs in such cases, they are fixed by the Lord Chancellor and any five County Court Judges. I am advised that they cover the whole proceeding from beginning to end, and seem to be fixed with great regard to economy. The trouble in a small case is just as much as in a large one, and the amount of the rent is no test of the work to be done. The question of the revision of the civil bill costs has not been before the present Lord Chancellor; but his Lordship informs me that he will be happy to confer with the Chairmen to see if any revision may be proper or practicable.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACTING MAIL GUARDS.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, If he has received a Memorial, dated 30th November 1883, from the three Mail Messengers who belonged to the late class of Acting Mail Guards in Ireland; and, if so, when may they expect his reply; and, if he is unable to grant their prayer by giving them even a promise of promotion to positions of nearly equal remuneration to those conferred upon their senior comrades, will he allow them to resign on compensation, or grant them the amount of emoluments which they can show to have forfeited while employed as Acting Mail Guards?

MR. FAWCETT: The Memorial referred to has been for some time under my consideration. I believe in a week or 10 days I shall be in a position to arrive at a decision, and I shall communicate the result to the hon. Member for Monaghan.

IRELAND—THE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD—THE STAFF.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table Copies of the documents relating to the establishment of a permanent staff in the office of the Intermediate Education Board, including the recommendations made from time to time by the Board, the Report of the Committee recently appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, and the Correspondence which has taken place on the subject since the formation of the office between the Board, the Irish Government, and Her Majesty's Treasury?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is not usual to lay on the Table Reports of Departmental Committees of Inquiry, or Correspondence of the nature referred to. I cannot undertake to make any exception to the usual practice in this case.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—STOPPAGES.

MR. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Under what authority did the police authorities stop two and a-half per cent. from the payment of the Royal Irish Constabulary from 1836 to 1883;

when was it discovered that this was illegal; what became of this money; if the stoppage was illegal are the Government prepared to refund the money with interest to the men who earned it, and in case of death to the next of kin; what fund was created by this money and is it still in existence; is it a fact that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are entitled to one-third of all fines imposed on persons under the Summary Jurisdiction Act in which they are prosecutors; was this third taken from them about 1838-9; was this money put into the same fund with the two and a-half per cent. deducted from their pay; what became of it and to what purpose is it appropriated; and, is it a fact that all fines imposed on members of the Royal Irish Constabulary from the formation of the force for breaches of regulation, &c. was put into the same fund as the two former items; and, if not, to what purpose was it applied, and what is the amount up to the present date?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The stoppages made from the pay of the Royal Irish Constabulary on account of superannuation and the Police Reward Fund between 1836 and 1883 were in strict accordance with the Acts of Parliament in force at the time. They were, therefore, never illegal. There never was any accumulation on account of the superannuation deduction. On the contrary, the sum was always insufficient, and was supplemented by Parliament. Since 1866 there has been an accumulation arising from the deduction on account of the Police Reward Fund, supplemented by portions of fines in certain cases in which the police are prosecutors, and by any fines imposed on members of the Force for breach of regulations. The sum thus accumulated is about £105,000, and it is available for the purpose indicated by the Statute regulating it (29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 103, s. 9). It is liable for rewards to deserving members of the Force, and for gratuities to the widows and children of about 4,000 pensioners on their decease, and of men who may die in the Service. Men who joined after the passing of the Constabulary Act of last Session are not liable to any deduction on account of this Fund, nor are they or their families entitled to benefit from it. As regards the appropriation of fines to this Fund, the facts are that no member of the Force, as constituted in 1836, has, or ever had, any personal interest in, or right to, any portion of a fine imposed in a case prosecuted by him; nor is the Force as a body entitled as of right to portions of fines, except in certain cases of conviction for drunkenness in towns. Portions of fines may be awarded to the police by magistrates, and all portions of fines, however arising, have from the first been payable to the Police Reward Fund, pursuant to 6 & 7 *Will.* IV. c. 13, s. 9.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—POLICE HUTS IN COUNTY CLARE.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that a police hut, removed about six months since from Kilmoon, Lisdoonvarna, county Clare, has been, or is in process of being re-erected; if this is for the protection of a man named Gardner; if he can state how many threatening letters Gardner has received; if he will state how many policemen are to be stationed at this hut, and upon what district the extra charge is to be levied; and, if he will state the distance, as the crow flies, from the police barrack at Lisdoonvarna to Kilmoon?

Mr. TREVELYAN: A hut is in process of being erected, and will be occupied by five men. They are intended mainly for the protection of a man named Gardner. Within the last 12 months this man has received two threatening letters, and a calf, his property, was maliciously killed. Early in last year his house was fired into. No district will be charged with the cost of the police. The distance from Kilmoon to Lisdoonvarna is about two miles as the crow flies.

ARMY—THE NORMAL MILITARY SCHOOL.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether neither the head master of the Normal School nor the "upper" (head) master of the Model School is, or has been, an Army schoolmaster; whether the head master at the Hibernian School has filled his present post for thirty-eight and a-half years, has 158 boys to look after, and a fixed salary of £270, while the head master at Chelsea with eight and a-half years' service as head, and a total of twenty-seven years' service, has a salary progressing from a minimum of £270 to a maximum of £350 with only 100 boys in his own immediate charge; and, whether he will reconsider the advisability of removing the inequalities existing in this matter as between the two institutions and the two countries?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Normal School is a training school for Army schoolmasters, and the head master's duties are quite distinct from those of the upper masters of the Royal Military Asylum and Royal Hibernian Military School. He is a civilian, and has nothing to do with either of those schools. The upper master of the model school is not an Army schoolmaster; but all the under masters are. The other particulars in the hon. Member's Question are accurate. As regards the inequalities in the salaries of the respective head masters, it must be remarked that the principal duty of a head master is the charge of the whole school under him. I will cause further inquiry to be made, whether, judging by this standard, there is a case for increasing the salary of the head master of the Hibernian School.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—ANTRIM ARTILLERY—MAJOR JOHNSTON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the communication of Major Johnston, Antrim Artillery, in March 1883, to the Adjutant General in Dublin, with regard to his conduct on the night the hotel at Carrickfergus was entered by a party of Officers, is substantially the same as his statement to the right honourable Gentleman?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he was not aware of any statement made by Major Johnston with regard to this occurrence, which took place 10 years ago.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—CASES LISTED AT NAVAN.

MR. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether cases listed for hearing before the Sub-Commission of the Land Court at Navan in April 1882 are still unheard, while many cases listed since then have been disposed of; if so, why?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that if there are any cases which were listed for hearing at Navan in 1882, and are still undisposed of, they must be cases for the adjournment of which there were special reasons. If any cases can be named by the hon. Member that were listed so long ago as April, 1882, the cause of their being still undisposed of can be explained.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PARTY PROCESSIONS—OMAGH PETTY SESSIONS CLERK.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the statement that Angus Hannan, lately convicted by the Omagh Bench of Magistrates of carrying a loaded revolver in a proclaimed district, and of threatening a sentry with it, is not an Orangeman, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that it appears by the published Reports of the Grand Orange Lodge of Tyrone that Hannan has been for years a member of that body; whether one of the magistrates who tried the case, Major Auchinleck, had marched with Hannan in an Orange procession to disturb the meetings at Omagh and Dromore; whether the magistrates of the Omagh Petty Sessions Bench allow their clerk, Captain Rowley A. Miller, to be absent from his office for some days every week in contravention of the Law, and his duties to be performed by Angus Hannan, convicted as above mentioned; and, whether this state of things will be permitted to continue?

MR. TREVELYAN: I do not quite know what the hon. Member alludes to in his statement that Angus Hannan is not an Orangeman. I did not make such a statement. I said the charge against Hannan was not a Party one, and likewise that the Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates informed me he did not know he was an Orangeman. However, as a matter of fact, he marched in an Orange procession in which Major Auchinleck was concerned. I have seen no published Report of the Grand Orange Lodge of Tyrone, nor do I know that any such Reports are published. With regard to the duties of the Clerk of Petty Sessions at Omagh, I find the facts to be as follows:—Nine years ago the magistrates made regulations requiring Captain Miller to be in his office at certain hours on certain days. They did not thereby release him from responsibility for duty that might arise on other days; and he has been warned by the present Registrar that permission from the Justices would be no excuse for absence if it led to substantial difficulty in public business. The Clerk has been in the habit, with the sanction of the Justices, of sometimes employing Hannan to act in his absence. This has not been permitted since the latter was convicted of carrying arms without licence in a proclaimed district.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CORONERS' EXPENSES.

Colonel NOLAN asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If Coroners, when obliged by Law to attend at assizes during the trial of prisoners committed by them on the verdict of the Coroner's jury, are entitled to the expenses caused by such attendance, or are they bound to defray such expenses out of their own pockets?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker), in reply, said, that Coroners, when obliged by law to attend at Assizes during the trial of prisoners committed by them, were not entitled to expenses; but if they were summoned by the Crown Solicitor their expenses were paid by the Crown.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—COMPULSORY SLAUGHTER—IRISH PRIVY COUNCIL ORDERS.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the uncertainty entertained by certain public bodies in Ireland as to the scope of the Irish Privy Council Order, No. 961; and, if so, whether he would explain the Order in question to the House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am not aware that any uncertainty exists with regard to the Order referred to, the object of which is to give powers of compulsory slaughter to prevent the spread of foot-and-mouth disease to such Local Authorities as wish to have such powers. A similar Order was passed in England a fortnight ago. Happily, there is not much reason to apprehend that many Local Authorities in Ireland will require to exercise the powers given by this Order, as foot-and-mouth disease exists now in only one place in the country—Dunshaughlin, in the county of Meath. It may, therefore, be of great importance, in the event of the disease reappearing, that Local Authorities should have the power of stamping it out at once.

WEST INDIES (JAMAICA)—FOOD TAXES.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Secretary of State intends to give effect to those parts of the Report of the recent Royal Commission in reference to Jamaica which propose to retain the greater part of the taxes on food; to place an increased and differentiated tax on land without reference to its use or quality, but only to the size of the holdings, small properties paying 1*s.* per acre, and large properties 1½*d.* per acre; and, after abolishing the District Courts, to throw a greater share of the minor judicial work into the hands of unpaid magistrates?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Secretary of State is waiting to receive the views of the Colonial Government and Colonial Legislature on all the recommendations of the Royal Commission; but in the despatch of the 1st of December, which has been laid before Parliament with the Report, a qualified concurrence has been expressed on the subject of District Courts, and with the proposal to utilize to a greater extent than heretofore the services of the unpaid magistrates.

MALTA—FOOD TAXES.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether anything has been done to relieve the poorer classes in Malta of the unequal taxes on food, as recommended by Her Majesty's Commissioner, Mr. Rowsell, some years ago?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Proposals for the diminution of the wheat tax have been brought before the Colonial Legislature; but they have been invariably opposed by the elected Members. In view of the declarations made by successive Secretaries of State, that the official majority shall not be used to override the elected Members in matters purely financial, and of mere local concern, Her Majesty's Government do not think it right to carry these proposals by that majority. The matter must now rest with the people of Malta themselves.

ARMY (INDIA)—MAJOR HUTCHINSON.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Major Hutchinson, late of the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, was, on August 16th, 1880, ordered out to India at a few days' notice, being thus put to the expense of an Indian outfit, &c., although it was known at the time that he would be compulsorily retired in a short space of time; whether it is usual in such cases to send such officers to the depôt; whether, having landed in India on 12th September, 1880, he was compulsorily retired on December 31st of the same year, in accordance with Royal Warrant; whether he at once applied for a passage home but, through no fault of his own, was unable to receive one till January 25th, 1881; whether he was struck off Indian pay and allowances from December 31st, 1880, and had to revert to the ordinary English half-pay; whether by G.G.O., No. 482, of 1877, paragraph 6, he was entitled to Indian pay and allowance till the date of his leaving the station; and, whether it is the intention of the War Office in any way to compensate this officer?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The rule is that if a battalion is ordered out on active service all its available officers go with it; but if it proceeds on ordinary relief, officers about to be retired are detained in this country. The battalion was ordered on active service in August, 1880, when a continuation of operations in Afghanistan was expected. Major Hutchinson was placed on retired pay under the provisions of the Royal Warrant from the 1st of January, 1881. He applied at once for a passage home; but was unavoidably detained for 24 days at the port of embarkation. He received Indian pay and allowances up to the date of quitting his station, and British half-pay from that date. This was entirely under, and in accordance with, Indian pay regulations, over which the War Office has no control. I am not prepared to say that the case was not a hard one; but as Major Hutchinson was treated strictly in accordance with the Regulations applicable to all officers, I do not see how he can be granted exceptional advantage in the way of compensation.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS—CASE OF WILLIAM HAYWARD.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to a report in *The Birmingham Daily Mail* of March 8th, to the effect that a child named William H. Hayward, aged seven, has died from over-pressure of work at St. Mary's School, Wolverhampton; and, if there is any truth in the report?

Mr. MUNDELLA: My attention was called to the paragraph in question, and I sent it down to Her Majesty's Inspector for his Report thereon. It appears there was no inquest, and no evidence taken as to the cause of death. The doctor who was called in expressed his opinion that the child died from brain fever—the exciting cause being school work. Her Majesty's Inspector doubts both these conclusions, and asks for a *post-mortem* examination; but the child is buried, and I have no power to make such an order. He says the child complained chiefly of sore throat; that he was a delicate boy of seven years of age in September last; that he had no home lessons; and that although he lived near the school and the teacher frequently passed the house no complaint was ever made by the parents. The boy had recently passed the first Standard. It seems impossible that this child can have been over-pressed.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether the Inspector who had controverted the doctor's opinion had himself received a medical education?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I am unable to say that.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA OFFICERS—STATISTICS.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Return showing, by ranks and by years, the number of persons who have been appointed as Officers to the Militia during the last five years, and also the number of Officers, specifying their rank, who have left the Militia during the same five years; with a gross total of appointments and a gross total of retirements for the five years?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The hon. and gallant Member can have the Return if he will move for it.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POLAND STREET WORKHOUSE INQUIRY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. J. D. Bliss, the master of the Poland Street Workhouse of the Westminster Union, sent up twelve ounces of suet pudding, about midday on the 22nd of December last. for the dinner of an inmate named Henry Gorman, who died two hours afterwards; whether it was reported to the master, the previous day, that Henry Gorman was in a dying condition; whether it is the duty of the master to visit, every night, the male wards of the workhouse, and whether, on the night of Friday the 21st of December last, the ward in which Henry Gorman was located was so visited by the master; and, whether it was the duty of the master to have seen that Gorman was not left unattended, either during the day or night, after notice was received of his being in a dying condition?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: As I stated yesterday, the medical officer not having ordered special diet for this unfortunate man Gorman, though I think he ought to have done so, the ordinary diet was supplied. The master ought to visit the male wards before 9 o'clock every night; but on the night in question he did not do so, as he was at a meeting of the Guardians. The master was informed that the man was very ill, but not that he was dying. Two out of the eight beds in the wards were occupied by wardsmen, and during the day the man had a paid attendant.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PATRONAGE)—OFFICIAL RECEIVERS.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is compatible with the duties of an official Receiver in Bankruptcy to act as an election agent; and, if such is the case, whether the performance of electioneering functions by a salaried official is in contravention of the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act of last Session?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, there was nothing in the Bankruptcy Act prohibiting a Receiver in Bankruptcy from acting as an election agent, nor would his doing so be in contravention of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act. There was, in fact, nothing but the good feeling which controlled the extent to which such an officer might take part in an election which could supply any rule on the subject.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE—GENERAL GRAHAM'S INSTRUCTIONS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the instructions which this House was informed had been sent to General Graham, to confine all offensive Military operations to those necessary for the defence of Suakin, have been modified or supplemented?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Since my hon. Friend gave Notice of the Question which he has put, I have looked through all the telegrams which have been received from or despatched to General Graham; and I think it might be productive of some harm if I were to refer in detail to those telegrams before receiving from General Graham a reply to the message which, as I said yesterday, I had sent to that gallant Officer. I may say, however, that the instructions sent to General Graham in the first instance have not been modified in any material respect; but I do not wish the House to accept my own opinions as to those instructions until they are in the hands of hon. Members. The only telegram I have received from General Graham in the course of to-day is the following:—From Major General Sir G. Graham to the Secretary of State for War (despatched Suakin, 14th March, 3.20 P.M., received 3 P.M.)—

> "Sheik Mahmoud Ali believes that when news of Osman's defeat yesterday has spread among tribes they will become peaceful, and the Berber road will become clear in about 10 days."

I have telegraphed again, asking the General to send further details as to his movements, and asking for lists of killed and wounded.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: May I ask the noble Marquess whether General Graham is free to go to Berber?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think I had better defer any answer until I have received the further Report of General Graham.

ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT—REGIMENTAL PAYMASTERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there are at present six Cavalry Regiments, one West India Regiment, and twenty-nine Line Battalions, in which the pay duties are administered by Acting Paymasters or Committees; if he will state the number of Officers of the Army Pay Department who have retired from the Service, but, in consequence of the small number of probationers for the Department, are still employed by the War Office; whether the duties of Chief Paymaster, in the Woolwich and North British Districts, are entrusted to Officers who have so retired; and, whether the Commissariat Department, on its formation, was granted higher rank and pay on account of the great responsibility involved in the charge of the Treasury Chest; and, if so, why the same privileges are not accorded to Officers of the Army Pay Department, to whom are entrusted now these same duties?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: *The Army List* will show that there are six Cavalry regiments and 29 battalions which have not Paymasters attached to them; to 13 of these, however, Paymasters have been detailed; but the fact of their having joined has not yet been notified in *The Army List.* The West India Regiments are allowed one Paymaster only. There are seven officers on the Retired List of the Army Pay Department, who are temporarily employed in consequence of the Department being under its establishment. It may be here mentioned that since the beginning of this year 12 officers have applied to become candidates for the Department. The duties of Chief Paymaster in the Woolwich and North British District are being performed by officers on the Retired List temporarily, only until the arrival home of Chief Paymasters from foreign service. The rank given to the Commissariat Department was not granted with reference to Treasury Chest duties only, but mainly on account of the other duties for which that Department is responsible. When the Pay Department was formed in 1878, the highest rank in it was that of Major. Since then the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel have been given to the officers in charge of the principal stations, and abroad these are the officers who have custody of the Treasury Chest. At the few stations abroad, where an officer of this rank is not serving, the officer in charge is always granted additional pay for the responsibility of the Chest duties.

LAW AND JUSTICE—ETIQUETTE OF THE BAR.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General, If there is a rule or understanding in force at the English Bar by reason of which a member of that Bar does not practise in any Court in which his father presides as Judge?

Mr. WARTON: I rise to Order. I wish to ask, Sir, whether it is in Order to put this Question on the Paper because the hon. Member may have a personal animosity to some County Court Judge?

Mr. SEXTON: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether the hon. and learned Member is in Order in imputing feelings of personal animosity to an hon. Member?

Mr. SPEAKER: I see nothing irregular in the Question of the hon. Member for Sligo.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): There is no such rule or understanding that I know of. In practice, there are a great many instances to the contrary.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that at a convenient opportunity I will move that such a rule or understanding be established, especially with regard to Ireland.

CATTLE IMPORTATION—LOSSES OF CATTLE AT SEA.

Mr. DUCKHAM asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Return of the losses of live cattle, sheep, and pigs, destined for British ports, which have been thrown overboard at sea, through stress of weather, during the past year?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, he would furnish as full a Return as was possible.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (for Mr. CHAPLIN) asked, with reference to the progress of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill, Whether the Government will proceed with the Second Reading of that measure at the earliest possible opportunity after the present necessities of Supply have been disposed of; and, whether they will take the Committee on that Bill before the next stage of the Representation of the People Bill?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reply to the first part of the Question, I have to say that the Government propose, with the concurrence of the House, to proceed more expeditiously than the hon. and gallant Member asks. The Government would ask the House to agree to take a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next for the purpose of proceeding with the second reading of this Bill. With regard to the last Question, the hon. and gallant Gentleman must be aware that it is impossible for the Government, and I believe it would be absolutely without precedent, to make any announcement as to their intention in regard to a stage of the Bill subsequent to the one which has not already been reached. I am, therefore, quite unable to say what would be the course of the Government in regard to this Bill until the second reading has been disposed of.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT wished to know whether the Government would postpone the sitting of Committees on Private Bills on Tuesday next if the second reading of the Bill relating to contagious diseases of animals was to be taken at a Morning Sitting on that day, inasmuch as many hon. Members who took a great interest in the question, and would probably wish to speak upon it, were Members of Committees which would be sitting at the time?

MR. HEALY asked if there would be any advantage gained by taking the Bill at a Morning Sitting, because it would probably be talked out?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I think it is impossible to assume the second reading of a Bill of this kind would be talked out at a Morning Sitting until we hear more opinions in regard to it. With regard to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member, I conceive that inconvenience, whatever it may be, must occasionally occur in connection with Committees whenever Morning Sittings are taken. I am afraid this is the only arrangement that it is in the power of the Government to propose for the purpose of facilitating the progress of this Bill.

PARLIAMENT — SELECT COMMITTEES —DISCLOSURE OF PROCEEDINGS.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. ONSLOW: I wish to call the attention of the House to a matter which is personal to myself, and to put a Question to you, Sir, as I consider the matter to be one of importance in a public point of view. I am a Member of the Select Committee on Indian Railways, and that Committee met, according to the usual notice, at 3 o'clock on Wednesday last. I deemed it my duty then to raise a protest to which I will not further refer, as I am under the impression that everything stated in the Committee Room is strictly private and confidential. When I went into the room I think there were three Gentlemen present, one reporter for the Press, and two gentlemen connected with the India Office. Some Member of the Committee remarked that the proceedings were private, and we had the room cleared of all except the Members of the Committee. It was then that I made my protest; and to-day a friend of mine remarked that he had seen that I, as a Member of the Committee, had objected to a certain Gentleman as Chairman. I immediately said to him—"How do you know anything about that? Everything said there was strictly private and confidential, and there was no reporter present." My friend replied—"I think I saw an account in *The Times* or *The Standard*." I looked into those papers, but found no reference to the matter. Unfortunately, I did not see *The Daily News* of yesterday, but I have obtained a copy since; and I will read to the House the paragraph which appears in that paper—

> "A remarkable incident took place yesterday at the meeting of the Committee on East India Railways. Mr. J. K. Cross proposed Mr. Baxter

as Chairman. Mr. Onslow, protesting that such an appointment would be unpopular in India, proposed Mr. W. H. Smith. Mr. Smith declining to be nominated, and Mr. Onslow's proposition finding no Seconder, it fell to the ground, and Mr. Baxter was elected Chairman."

I may say that that is an entirely garbled and grossly untrue statement of what took place, and I do not feel it my duty to state exactly what did take place; because, as I said before, the proceedings were of a private and confidential character. But if these garbled statements are to appear of what takes place on confidential matters in a Committee Room, I fail to see of what use Committees will be. Hon. Members know very well that, time after time, a Committee Room is cleared when the Committee are engaged in discussing matters in private; but if these private conversations are to get into the newspapers in a way that is grossly untrue, the whole object of appointing Committees of this nature will, in my opinion, be defeated. I do not bring the question before the House as exactly a matter of Privilege; but I have deemed it my duty to say these few words, because the same thing has happened time after time, and may be constantly repeated. There can be no doubt that, when a Committee Room is cleared, what afterwards takes place in the Committee should not be allowed to appear in the newspapers. If nothing is done to check the system, I am afraid the wretched habit we have of lobbying in the House of Commons, by members of the Press, will go on increasing more and more every day. I am sorry that the paragraph should have appeared in a newspaper, because there is a semblance of truth in it; and, as far as I am concerned, I can honestly say that I should have been the last person in the world to have said a word outside the Committee Room of any of the transactions which took place in the Committee Room itself. I wish to give the House an assurance that I have had no part whatever in circulating the report which I have read.

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. Member for Guildford, I have to say that no doubt the hon. Member has rightly stated the Rule which applies to the proceedings of Select Committees of the House of the nature to which he has referred. They are of a strictly private and confidential nature; and it is a circumstance very much to be regretted, and highly irregular, that the details of what passed in the Committee, after the room was cleared of strangers, should have been made public, especially as I understand an erroneous version has been published.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POSTPONEMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Before the Orders of the Day are reached, I should like, if I may be allowed to do so, to make an appeal to my hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) and to the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel). If they were present in the House at an early hour this morning they will recollect the statement that was made as to the position of the House in regard to the Business of Supply, and especially the Supplementary Estimates. It was explained by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that unless those Supplementary Estimates were disposed of this evening it would be necessary to do what the House was always unwilling to do—resort to a Sitting on Saturday. I am very unwilling to make such an appeal at so early a period of the Session; but those hon. Members who have on the Paper Motions on going into Committee of Supply this evening would be rendering very great service to the House, and taking a course which would be very much to the convenience, and, I believe, to the satisfaction of the House, if they could be prevailed upon to postpone those Motions, and enable the Committee to resume Business on the further consideration of the Supplementary Estimates.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR said, the appeal of the noble Marquess placed him in an embarrassing and delicate position. He had, with great difficulty and with some good fortune, succeeded in getting the first place to-night for raising a discussion on a matter of very considerable interest to the House and of importance to the country; and he might say that he had received communications with regard to it from England, Scotland, and Ireland, urging him to proceed with his Motion. At the same time, he felt that on a question of this kind he was in the hands of the House. If it were the wish of the House that he should give way on this occasion, he should not stand in the way of the remainder of the Supplementary Estimates being proceeded with. He was well aware that the threat of a Saturday Sitting was a serious affair; but he saw that there were several other Motions upon the Paper, and he did not see the use of his giving way unless the hon. Members having Motions upon the Paper agreed to give way also. Several of those Motions were of great importance; and the one which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel), with reference to Aberystwith College, was of even greater importance than the one which he hoped to have the honour of submitting to the House. He did not know whether the other hon. Members intended to give way. ["No!"] He was entirely in the hands of the House. If other hon. Members gave way he would not press his Motion.

Mr. RENDEL said, he felt himself to be somewhat in the same position as the hon. Member who had just sat down. He should greatly regret to stand in the way of Public Business; but his Motion involved a subject of deep interest to a large body of persons, seeing that recently no fewer than 130 public meetings had been held with regard to it. It would be with great reluctance that he should forego the advantage he had obtained for his Motion; but he also should place himself in the hands of the House in the matter. He should have an opportunity of calling attention to the subject on the Estimates.

Captain PRICE said, that in reply to the very modest request of the noble Marquess that private Members should practically give up all their rights, he also placed himself entirely in the hands of the House. If, in the opinion of the Leaders of his Party, he should be furthering Public Business by so doing, he would withdraw his Motion (respecting the Government of Jamaica). He had given way last Session at the request of Her Majesty's Government, and he now appealed to their sense of fairness to allow his Motion to be brought on.

Mr. WARTON was of opinion that the position in which the House was placed was the result of the mismanagement of the Government, who had deliberately chosen, knowing the requirements of the law with regard to the Estimates, to waste the time of the House, first of all, on the first night of the Session, by having present a Minister who was not to speak, and absent a Minister who was to speak; then by wasting a day on their pet subject—Grand Committees—and two other days on the Reform Bill. For his part, he did not feel inclined to give way.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he did not think that the concessions made by hon. Members opposite would tend to the advancement of Public Business, seeing that there were 14 Notices of Motion upon the Paper; and, therefore, he hoped that hon. Members opposite would not give way.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he ought to have explained that he could not possibly have asked his hon. Friends the Members for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) and Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel) to give up the positions they had obtained, unless there was a general agreement among those who had Notices on the Paper that they would postpone their Motions. With regard to the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price), he understood the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) had obtained a place on the Paper for a discussion on the same subject, and the hon. and gallant Member would have then an opportunity of making any statement.

Mr. HEALY said, that if Her Majesty's Government would give him a Select Committee to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of Michael Watters in Mountjoy Prison he would give way.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, his Motion (a Motion calling for the dismissal of Captain Plunkett, R.M.) was of considerable importance, and affected a large district, and he could not forego any opportunity of discussing it.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that with regard to the request of the hon. Member (Mr. Healy), he might say that all the Papers relating to the case of Watters were before the Royal Commission on Prisons; and the Commission, he presumed, had the confidence of all shades of politics in Ireland. The matter involved by the Motion of the hon. Member for Mallow had been gone into thoroughly in the discussion on

Vote 31. He earnestly trusted that the hon. Members would not stand between the House and the discussion of the remaining Supplementary Estimates.

MR. HEALY remarked, that in August last he had called the attention of the Government to the fact that Michael Watters was dying; but instead of releasing him they had released another man, under the pretence that he was dying. Michael Watters was now dead, and he wished that the circumstances should be inquired into.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether, in the event of an arrangement being come to, the Government would take the Report of Supply on Monday?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that Supply would be the first Order of the Day on Monday. when the Army Estimates would be taken. The Report of Supply would be taken afterwards.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that he did not know whether he had anything particular to say upon this subject; but from what he had read in the public journals he certainly understood that it was contemplated last night to hold a Sitting of the House on Saturday. That was not a very popular proposal to make; but, doubtless, it had been made for the sake of getting the Votes passed within the necessary period. He must confess that, looking at the number and character of the Notices upon the Paper for this evening, he did not think it was likely they would be cleared off in time to take the rest of the Supplementary Estimates; and, therefore, he was scarcely surprised at the appeal which the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) had made to those hon. Members who had Motions standing upon the Paper in their name. Of course, if those hon. Members would waive their rights they might hope to be able to avoid a Sitting on Saturday; although, if it were necessary that such a Sitting should be held, many hon. Members were prepared to sacrifice their personal convenience for the public good. With regard to the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price), to which the noble Marquess had referred, the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) was down for Tuesday in Easter week, and therefore it was not very likely to be taken.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, that his Motion stood for the Tuesday preceding Easter week.

MR. HEALY said, if the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) did not bring on his Motion he would bring his.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.—RESOLUTION.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR, in rising to call attention to the system of Private Bill Legislation; and to move—

> "That this House adheres to the Resolution of March 22nd 1872, that the system of Private Bill Legislation calls for the attention of Parliament and of Her Majesty's Government, and requires reform; that this House, while maintaining the ultimate control of Parliament over Private Bill Legislation, is of opinion that a Tribunal, to take the place of Private Bill Committees, should be created which should investigate the facts and deal with the evidence relating to Private Bills, and, so far as possible, in the locality affected by such Bills, whether in England, or in Scotland, or in Ireland, and report thereon to Parliament,"

said, that, in bringing this Motion before the House, the best thing he could do was to recall to the House the position in which it stood with regard to this Resolution, and also with regard to the general circumstances which surround the question of Private Bill legislation. For 50 years there had been continual dissatisfaction and grumbling with regard to the manner in which Private Bill legislation was carried on. The matter had frequently been brought before the House. Committee after Committee had sat to consider what was the best means of amending the present state of things. The Library was full of material and valuable information, for nearly all the information which could be obtained had been already secured. But they were no further on than they were 50 years ago. In 1872 the question came nearer solution than it had done before or since. In that year the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster brought forward a Resolution in almost identical terms with the first part of the present Motion. The right hon. Gentleman brought the matter before the House in a speech which had been practically the text-book of the subject ever since. The Resolution was carried, and it was declared to be the opinion of the House that the system of Private Bill legislation called for the attention of Parliament and Her Majesty's Government, and required reform. Twelve years had passed since then, and something like £9,000,000 had been spent on Parliamentary litigation. They had had a series of haphazard and unsatisfactory decisions, and small towns and centres of industry had been prevented from carrying out useful projects owing to the expense of Parliamentary contests. Great monopolist Railway Companies had crushed out their humbler rivals, and all that time the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman had remained a dead letter. Last year the matter was revived. The old arguments were brought up, and the familiar figures were again quoted. The discussion was an interesting one, but the Resolution proved abortive. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, speaking on behalf of the Government, had practically accepted the first Resolution which was on the Paper, and the Speaker was on the point of putting the Question, when, by the interposition of an hon. Member, whom he was glad not to see in his place on the present occasion, the House was counted out, and so another year was lost, nearly another £1,000,000 was spent, more doubtful decisions were given, and they were no further on than they were before.

But though no direct results ensued from the discussion of last year, he could say with confidence that there had been very material indirect results. He had received communications from many parts of England, from Ireland, and from Scotland, calling attention to the unsatisfactory arrangements that existed at present, and pressing him to bring the matter before the House, and not to rest until the Government had taken it up with the intention of dealing with it in a thorough manner. In Ireland the grievance was one of old standing, and it was a real and very serious grievance. A few years ago many Bills were introduced by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland; but these Bills came to nothing. The same excuse was always given, that it was impossible to legislate for one part of the Kingdom alone. The grievance still remained. Only last year the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) stated that the present system of Private Bill legislation was fatal to the industrial resources of Ireland. He did not think the hon. Member said a word too much in making that statement. On February 21st, at a great meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, a Resolution brought with much force before the meeting by a well-known gentleman from the Sister Kingdom was carried in favour of such a proposal as he now submitted to the House. In his own country — Scotland — and he thought every Scotch Member would agree with him—the grievance had been long and seriously felt. From the great distance that Scotland was from the Metropolis, the grievance was felt there even more keenly than it was in this country. From the large burghs—Edinburgh, Greenock, Dundee, and other places—he had received urgent requests to go on with this Resolution. At a great national meeting upon a cognate subject, the magistrates of all the principal towns in Scotland brought forward this matter, and urged it upon the meeting. From the smaller burghs the complaint was universal. The complaint was not that the expense of Private Bill legislation was excessive, but that it was absolutely prohibitory to anything like industrial enterprize. In one burgh which he knew intimately there was a demand for a new water supply. The drinking water was not sufficient, and summer visitors who would come to that town were prevented from coming because the water was so scant. That was a small burgh, with a modest income; it could not face a Parliamentary contest; it would be bankrupt if it did. Another burgh wanted to get a better means of lighting; but the authorities were afraid of the expense. In another flourishing burgh, which had been isolated for many years because it stood apart from the main stream of enterprize, the inhabitants had, with great difficulty and trouble, succeeded in raising sufficient capital to start a branch railway connected with the main line; but if any landlord, through whose land this railway would pass, should oppose the scheme, the result would be that the whole of the capital that had been subscribed for the construction of the railway would be eaten up by a Parliamentary contest. The consequence was that that burgh, which was eager to be connected with the centres of industry, and to keep itself abreast of the increasing prosperity of Scotland, was condemned to isolation, perhaps to decay, not owing to a want of energy or enterprize on the part of the inhabitants of the burgh, but owing to an old-fashioned system of legislation, without a parallel in any civilized country, which so taxed the enterprize and industry of the town that they could not push any matter in that direction for fear of bankruptcy. Hence it was that he had received many letters urging him to bring this matter before the House; and these letters must be his excuse for obtruding the subject again on the attention of the House.

Last year the House treated him with kind indulgence, and he took that opportunity of expressing his thanks to the House for its courtesy on that occasion. He knew he must not again trespass at any length on the indulgence of the House. His object that night would be not to repeat what he had said before, but only to state such new facts as had come to his knowledge and were before the House and the country since last year.

The objections to the present system were threefold—that the expense was ruinous; that the decisions of the Committees were uncertain and unsatisfactory; and, above all, that the public time of Members of Parliament was occupied and engrossed by matters which they were not specially fitted to inquire into, and they were thus deprived of the opportunity of attending to matters which they were much better able to understand. Last year many instances were cited of the extravagance of the present system. These arguments were not gainsaid, and they could not be gainsaid. What was said was that this extravagant and expensive procedure belonged to the old time—to the bad old days of railway speculation and railway legislation. But was this so? Last year they had no official data of recent date on this matter. There were some isolated cases adduced; but they were brushed aside as being exceptional. Since last year one or two remarkable cases had been before the Committees, and the House had got a series of official Returns which gave very valuable and useful information upon that point. Of the isolated cases he should only mention one, and that was the scheme of the Manchester Ship Canal. That Bill occupied much time, and proved abortive. It was thrown out in "another place" without any reason assigned for it. The Committee of the House of Commons found that "the Canal would afford valuable facilities for the trade of Lancashire, and ought to be sanctioned." The Committee of the House of Lords found, according to the usual formula, that "it was not expedient to proceed with the Bill in the present Session of Parliament." No spark of light or guidance, no reason assigned why it was not expedient; but it was merely stated that it was not expedient, and no kind of assistance was given to the promoters to help them in bringing forward a more satisfactory scheme. The Bill was 39 days in Committee of the House of Commons, and 10 days in Committee of the House of Lords. The cost of the scheme was not included in the Returns before the House, because the Returns only came down to the end of 1882. But hon. Members would see that in the case of a Bill that had been 49 days in Committee, attended by most of the talent and experience of the Parliamentary Bar, the expenses could not have been trifling. But they were not altogether without guidance. Evidence was given only yesterday, by the promoter of the scheme, to the effect that the costs of the Canal Bill to the promoters amounted to over £60,000, and they proposed to raise an additional sum this year, which would bring the expenses of the two years' contest up to something like £100,000 for the promoters alone. And when it was remembered that the scheme was opposed by all the great Railway Companies in the North of England, he did not think that he exaggerated when he said that the whole cost of the two Bills would be between £150,000 and £200,000. There was another scheme before a Committee last year—namely, the Barry Dock Scheme. That Bill was 27 days in the Committee of the House of Commons, and the Preamble was found proved unanimously, without calling upon counsel for the promoters to reply. It then went to the Committee of the House of Lords; it remained there 16 days, and it was thrown out without any reason assigned. They did not know whether that Committee was unanimous or not. There was no record. The consultations were held, as was usual, with closed doors, and we were left in darkness whether there was division of opinion or not. If the Bill had been before a Court of Law, they would have known how the opinions of the Judges had gone. In Committees we did not know. We were left behind a thick veil, which it was impossible to penetrate—even if it were decorous to attempt to do so. That Bill, he was informed, cost the promoters over £30,000; but he did not know the cost to the opponents. He thought he had shown that the expenses of modern legislation were not less costly than in the bad old days of railway legislation.

But there was a stronger argument to be gathered from the Returns before the House. The first of these Returns was a Return of the expenses incurred by Railway, Gas, and Water Companies in promoting Bills in Parliament from 1872 to 1882. There was a similar Return from Canal, Tramway, and Dock authorities; and a further Return from Town Councils, Local Boards, and other local authorities. These Returns, he was bound to say, were not entirely satisfactory. Some of them were redundant, and some of them were defective. They were redundant inasmuch as they gave in several instances the expenses, comparatively trifling, of Provisional Orders, which had not been asked for; and they were defective inasmuch as several Railway, Tramway, and Dock Companies had sent in no Returns at all. But, as they stood, they showed the following figures, which were to his mind somewhat startling. During the years from 1872 to 1882 Railway Companies had spent on Parliamentary litigation £3,900,000; Gas Companies, £356,000; Water Companies, £380,000; Canals, the modest sum of £40,000; Tramways, £375,000; Harbours and Docks, £360,000; Municipal Boroughs, as far as they had got Returns, and Local Boards, £1,300,000; making a total in 11 years, as returned, of £6,700,000 spent in promoting Bills in Committees of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords. But this did not represent the whole, as there was no Return from landowners and others who must have spent large sums in defending their interests. Taking an average of £28,000 a-year for these unknown quantities, which was a low average, they would be well within the mark if they said that there was a total in those years of £7,000,000 spent in Parliamentary litigation, and they would not be much above the mark if the annual expenses were put at £750,000 a-year. He found that in the old years, from 1856 to 1861, the average spent by Railways was £250,000; but in the 11 years since then they had spent £350,000, or £100,000 a-year more. Gas Companies had spent in the old time £13,000 a-year; in the new time they had spent more than double, £32,000. Water Companies in the old times spent £14,000 a-year; in the new time £34,000. The leading Railway Companies — excepting the London and North-Western Company, which gave a defective Return — had an average expenditure, from 1856 to 1861, of £82,000 a-year; in the second period it was £128,000 a-year. Those figures hardly bore out the view that those great expenses were only incurred in the old time. He thought they might say, with the old adage, that these expenses had increased, were increasing, and they ought to be diminished. He had found that in those 11 years 14 Railway Companies had spent among them £2,500,000; six English boroughs, and not the most important, spent £200,000; and two Scottish boroughs (Glasgow and Greenock) no less a sum than £138,000 in this species of legislation. Attention had been directed to these Returns in some of the leading organs of public opinion; and the leading organ, which had always been a true friend to any attempt to remedy this serious grievance, had pronounced these expenses to be "stupendous;" and he did not think hon. Members would consider that epithet too strong. During the last 50 years, from £35,000,000 to £40,000,000 had been spent in the Committees of the House of Commons and the House of Lords in litigation. The money had been paid to procure Parliamentary sanction for useful industrial enterprizes, and it was the public who paid this money, through shareholders of the various Companies concerned. Of course, the shareholders paid the money in the first instance; but the Directors did not wipe off those sums as bad debts. They recouped themselves by charging heavy freights and heavy tariffs. They were constantly hearing in the House of exorbitant railway charges. Those who represented the agricultural interests in this House were continually calling for some legislative enactments to compel Railway Companies to charge more moderate rates. But there was no use in asking the House to pass compulsory tariffs. They should ask the House to relieve them, and to relieve itself at the same time, by going to the root of the matter, and by changing this expensive Parliamentary tribunal. The House and the public could be relieved by the establishment of another tribunal that would do the work at half the money and with twice the efficiency.

He would not dwell upon the second count of the indictment—namely, that the decisions of the Committees were sometimes injurious and unsatisfactory. That was proved in 1872, and it was proved last year, and nothing had occurred to disprove it. It was admitted that Committees of this and the other House brought great industry, great zeal, and the highest sense of honour to bear upon their inquiries. But they were a fluctuating Body, and therefore must have less experience than would be the case with a permanent Body. They were also, for the most part, unfamiliar with the rules of evidence, and they were unable to hold their own against the strongest Bar in existence. It could not be said that the Committees, either of this or the other House, were a thoroughly satisfactory Body to give a decision on difficult and delicate questions involving large pecuniary interests. But he would not press that point further.

The first and second objections that he had alluded to were crying evils—namely, the heavy expenditure and the unsatisfactory decisions. But there was another difficulty, and that came nearer home to them—the Parliamentary difficulty. The difficulty of manning these Private Bill Committees existed in both Houses. Twenty years ago Lord Redesdale had practically admitted the difficulty, because he stated in Committee that he was only able to take a fraction of the Bills for initiation in the House of Lords, owing to the impossibility of manning the Committees in that House. The difficulty still continued. The average number of Bills which the House of Lords could undertake was only about one-third of the whole. The other two-thirds were therefore left for initiation in this House. In this House they were in no better position. It was admitted, on all hands, that the work of the House was excessive, and was more than they could undertake or carry out satisfactorily. The recent Autumn Session was an admission of the fact that they could not go on as they were doing. They had passed Rules which were more or less efficacious; but the important result arising from the Autumn Session was the establishment, as an experiment, of the machinery of the Grand Committees. They had now had a discussion as to the re-establishment of those Grand Committees; and, as far as he could judge, the universal opinion of the House was that those Committees were important institutions, and that in all probability, if they were successful this year, for the future they should have not two, but several Grand Committees. The question therefore was, how were the Grand Committees and the Private Bill Committees to go on together without clashing? Last Session there was a very serious case of clashing between those Committees. The hon. Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget) was appointed Chairman of a Railway Committee. He was also an invaluable Member of the Standing Committee on Law. On one occasion, it so happened that the hon. Member had to preside at the Railway Committee upstairs at the same time that he had to move certain Amendments in the Law Committee downstairs. He had to do one thing or the other, and he adjourned the Railway Committee. That adjournment was at great public cost. The witnesses and counsel were there, and the machinery and paraphernalia of the Committee were there. The matter ended in the only way in which it could end—namely, in the hon. Gentleman being discharged from the Chairmanship of the Railway Committee, and the Railway Committee being deprived of the services of an able and experienced Chairman. If he might be allowed to give an instance from his own experience, he might state that he had served on a Private Bill Committee last year, ably presided over by the right hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay). His hon. Friend the Member for North Ayrshire (Mr. Cochran-Patrick) was also a Member of that Committee; and it so happened that when the Committee was sitting the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons. In this Bill all the Scotch Representatives and the whole Scotch nation were much interested. There happened to be a number of Divisions on that Bill in Committee, in which they, the three Scotch Members sitting on the Private Bill Committee, considered it their duty to take part. There was the difficulty experienced by the hon. Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget) of being in two places at once. Their duty to the House called them to attend to the Private Bill Committee upstairs; their duty to their constituents called them to take part in the Divisions downstairs. They were torn in pieces by this conflict of duty, and he feared that both the Committee and the constituents suffered in consequence. Asking pardon of the House for this digression from the subject, he would express the hope that they might have an expression of opinion from the right hon. Baronet the Chairman of the Committee of Selection (Sir John Mowbray). So far they had not been favoured with the right hon. Gentleman's opinion; but they had the opinion of an active Member of the Committee of Selection on this subject—the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff)—that the existence of the Grand Committees had the effect of doubling the work of the Members. That was a very important admission, and he did not think it was too much to say; because he believed it would come to be a question, not whether they were to abolish the Private Bill Committees, but whether, owing to the difficulty of manning them, they would be able to continue them. There was another question which he wished to ask the House, and that was, had the public the same confidence in the decisions of the Private Bill Committees that it was at one time supposed to have? And in this connection he would cite the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), who last year admitted his apprehension that the present practice was losing the *prestige* and the confidence that used to attach to it in the eyes of the public. He thought there were few hon. Members who did not share that apprehension. They were told that the Committees of the House of Lords inspired more confidence than the Committees of the House of Commons, because they were a more stable Body. That might be so—he did not know; but if they considered the number of Bills that of recent years, and especially the last two years, had gone through this House and been thrown out in "another place," it would seem that the increase was remarkably greater. From 1870 to 1881 there were only two Bills on an average each year which had passed the House of Commons, and which were thrown out in "another place;" but in 1882 no less than eight Bills were thrown out, and last year six were thrown out, by the House of Lords after passing this House. He did not know whether this or the other House was right; but it looked as if this wholesale destruction of Bills tended to show that the confidence in "another place" of the wisdom of the Committees of this House might not be quite so strong as it used to be. And he did not feel quite certain that they, in this House, had absolute confidence in their own Committees. Everyone was aware how debates in the House on the second reading of Private Bills had multiplied. And what still more showed that the House had not the same confidence its Committees it once had was, that they had now continual Instructions to Committees which, though not unheard of at one time, were unusual. If the public and Parliament were losing confidence in these Private Bill Committees, what defence remained for them? If the question came to be whether the Private Bill Committees or Grand Committees should give way, there could be little doubt how the verdict would go. The verdict would be in favour of devolving the work of this overtaxed Assembly on the Grand Committees. It would not be in favour of continuing a system which entailed stupendous expenditure, which was unsatisfactory and uncertain, which wasted the precious time of the Members of Parliament, and which had apparently lost the confidence of Parliament and of the public.

Before concluding, he wished to make a few observations in reference to the Resolution he submitted to the House, because it differed in some material respects from those of last year. Then he submitted three Resolutions. The first was in general terms, and was the same as the beginning of the present Resolution, and that was carried at the instance of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1872. The second Resolution proposed three Commissions—one for England, one for Scotland, and one for Ireland; and the third Resolution proposed an appeal from these Commissions. The scheme formulated by these Resolutions was subjected to severe criticism, and it was then obvious to him that the opinion of more experienced Members was not favourable to it. He had, therefore, this year withdrawn the second and third Resolutions, and proposed to substitute one general Resolution. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster objected to the three Commissions, on the ground that there would not be work for them. His (Mr. Craig-Sellar's) present proposal was that there should be only one Commission to deal with this work, and that there ought to be a Scotch and Irish branch of this tribunal for dealing with Scotch and Irish Business. He did not know if his idea would meet with the approval of his Colleagues from Scotland. They had in Scotland 13 Judges of the Supreme Court. Their work, no doubt, was considerable; but, as compared with the work of the Judges in England, or even in Ireland, it was not excessive. It seemed to him that one of these Judges might very well be detailed to act as the permanent element in the Scottish branch of the tribunal, and he might be assisted by two assessors, either mercantile or engineering, or men of high position in other Professions. His idea, further, was that this Scotch branch should take evidence and deal with the facts in the locality, assisted by the local Bar, and in some small cases by local solicitors. He felt certain that that would be a satisfactory tribunal in Scotland, and he had very little doubt a similar tribunal would be successful in Ireland. In England his idea would be the extension of the Railway Commission, or something in the fashion of the Railway Commission might very well be appointed. They ought to be men highly paid, so that they would be above any sort of suspicion. There was no difficulty upon that score, as far as funds went, because, according to the Returns which had been presented to the House of the fees paid to the House of Commons and the House of Lords, there was a sum of £70,000 a-year which was available for the purpose of paying this tribunal and all its staff and branches. The plan would work in this way—Bills would of course come before this House as at present, they would go before the Examiners, would be read a first and second time, and, instead of being sent to Committees upstairs, they would be sent to this tribunal, which would report to Parliament, and the Bills would then go through the other stages of Parliamentary procedure. He had not mentioned the question of appeal, because he did not want to cumber the Resolution; but if such an appeal as was suggested last year should be thought necessary, a Joint Committee of both Houses might be appointed. By this scheme the time of 100 to 150 Members of Parliament would be saved, objections to Private Bill legislation would disappear, and the public would regain confidence in the decisions of Parliament in these matters. He had no doubt that this scheme, like that of last year, was an imperfect one. The main objection, however, which was urged last year he had met as far as he could; and as to the other objection, concerning the preliminary work, he had not attempted to deal with that. This House was jealous of any attempt to curtail its jurisdiction. He did not propose to do that. He proposed to relieve it of troublesome and vexatious work, which it did in a clumsy and unsatisfactory way, and with a vast expenditure of time and money. If the Government were to propose a more unceremonious and sweeping method of dealing with this private legislation, he should give them his hearty support. He believed public opinion was ripe for its being taken in hand and dealt with thoroughly; but a private Member could not do it. A private Member could only call attention to a real grievance when it existed. He could ask the House to change an old-fashioned system, which interfered with enterprize in small and not over wealthy communities, and tended in these communities to stagnation and decay, and he could invite the House to relieve itself of work which it did in an unsatisfactory way. But no private Member could formulate a scheme of reform of the internal machinery of this House which would be approved in all its details. That was a work which could be done only by a responsible Government, and the present Government was just such a Government as could deal with this matter in a thorough and satisfactory manner. He trusted the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who had long taken such a deep interest in this matter, would be able to accept the Resolution, and that he would give the House an undertaking that the Government would really deal vigorously and seriously with the question, so that ere long they might see this long-standing grievance swept away; that they might see the old system, with all its deadening influence on industry and on enterprize in small communities, disappear; and that they might have in its place a new and better system, inaugurated by the right hon. Gentleman himself, which would command the confidence of Parliament and of the country. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, he cordially seconded the Resolution, without committing himself to all the details of his hon. Friend's speech. He had been reproached for taking up this subject on account of his lack of practical experience, but that was to some extent a qualification; for if he had been a more regular attendant upon Private Bill Committees it might have been said that he was selfishly seeking his own relief at the expense of his public duties. He believed there was a very general feeling in all parts of the House that some reform was necessary. With regard to the solution of the problem as to what would be the best line in which reform in this matter could be best and most usefully carried out, it appeared to him that it rested between a proposal for legislation by means of Provisional Orders and a proposal to transfer the inquiries to an external Body of Commissioners. He owned that he was in favour of the second of those two modes; in the first place, because it would involve very much less change than the other; and, in the second place, because he could not think that legislation by means of Provisional Orders would be satisfactory, either to the House or to the country. It must be remembered that the House exercised extraordinarily little control over these Provisional Orders, and in his experience there was very rarely any discussion or debate upon them. The inquiries upon which they were based were all conducted before they came to the House, and there was no opportunity of giving instructions, or laying down any principles on which the inquiry should be conducted. Then, again, Private Bill legislation would become more and more a matter of routine in the Department in which it was conducted; and considerable jealousy might be felt, both in the House and in the country, if that great and most important part of the duties of Parliament were handed over to a Public Department. He did not say, however, that there would be any grounds for any such jealousy. That being so, he would feel more confidence in the inquiry being conducted after a Bill had been brought into the House. The first great requisite which, in his opinion, ought to be aimed at, was to maintain the control of the House over Private Bill legislation. He thought it most important that the House should keep in its hands the guidance and control of the general policy which was to be followed in dealing with the subjects with which Private Bills dealt, and that there should be free scope for the expression of local opinions by the Constitutional means of the voice of the Representatives of the localities in question. What the nature of the proposed external Body should be, how its Members should be chosen, and what their numbers should be, were all matters of detail, though they were most important. Speaking for himself, he thought that inquiry by a single good Commissioner would be better than inquiry by two or three, for this reason—that one competent Gentleman would give his undivided attention to the inquiry, instead of dividing the responsibility and attention with two or three others. As to the qualifications of this Commissioner, he should think he ought to be a Gentleman with a practical acquaintance with the conduct of inquiries of the kind, and with the elementary rules of evidence at least, and also with engineering and financial questions. As to the question of local inquiries, that seemed to him entirely a matter of comparative convenience and comparative expense. Where it would be necessary to retain the most eminent engineers and counsel it would probably prove less expensive to conduct the inquiry in London. On the other hand, he could conceive other cases where questions of fact, upon which the evidence of local witnesses might be required, would occur, and where it would be less expensive and more convenient to conduct the inquiry in a particular locality. The House should, however, remember that in proposing this Resolution it was not intended to put forward any matters of detail. The only object was to submit to the House some general principles upon which that reform, which he believed the majority of the House desired and regarded as necessary and expedient, should be conducted. He begged to second the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House adheres to the Resolution of March 22nd 1872, that the system of Private Bill Legislation calls for the attention of Parliament and of Her Majesty's Government, and requires reform; that this House, while maintaining the ultimate control of Parliament over Private Bill Legislation, is of opinion that a Tribunal, to take the place of Private Bill Committees, should be created which should investigate the facts and deal with the evidence relating to Private Bills, and, so far as possible, in the locality affected by such Bills, whether in England, or in Scotland, or in Ireland, and report thereon to Parliament,"—(*Mr. Craig-Sellar,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY said, he thought that the hon. Member who introduced this Resolution could scarcely have considered how vast was the change they were asked to inaugurate. That change was not so simple a matter as the hon. Member appeared to imagine. The difficulties which attended Private Bill legislation arose, in a great measure, from the inherent character of such legislation, and not from the character of the present tribunal. The hon. Member condemned the existing system on the ground that it was uncertain and expensive. It seemed to him, however, that the result of a demand for legislation in connection with which a question for consideration was how far public policy sanctioned interference with private property must inevitably be to a great extent uncertain. As to the question of expense, he would ask whether the costs incurred in cases like that of the Manchester Ship Canal Bill, or the Barry Docks Bill, were out of proportion to the interests involved? Whatever tribunals might be set up in lieu of the present Committees, great Companies would always employ the best counsel to represent them, and would not hesitate to incur great expenditure in the prosecution of their aims. The necessity for a great expenditure was in some degree a guarantee of the *bona fides* of the promoters of new schemes. Bogus schemes were not brought forward when large sums must necessarily be spent. As to the demand made upon the time of Members by Private Bill legislation, he might point out that while, 20 years ago, the average number of Private Bills, opposed and unopposed, which were introduced, was 600, the average for the last few years was only 300. In 1882 there were 159 opposed Bills, there being 145 Members on the Committees appointed to consider them, the average of their service being six days each; and in 1883 the number of Bills was 131, the number of Members 112, and the average of service nine days each. The hon. Member who had brought the Resolution forward expressed the opinion that the Private Bill Committees did not now command the confidence which was formerly placed in them. He feared that this loss of confidence, if there were such loss, not only attached to the Committees in question, but also to the discussions and decisions of Parliament itself. The hon. Member had cited cases in which discussions had been raised in that House on the Motion for the second reading of certain Bills approved by Committees; but that such discussions were raised did not show a want of confidence in the decisions of the Committees, but rather that the House was desirous of undertaking all the work which it could possibly get through, and disliked parting with any of its powers. It should be borne in mind, also, that the questions which had been mentioned as having been discussed in the House last Tuesday were exceptionally important. Surely the Parks Bill and the Ennerdale Railway Bill were fit measures for discussion in the House? He quite agreed that useful schemes ought not to be rendered abortive in consequence of the expense attaching to proceedings before Committees; but it was a matter for consideration whether the new tribunal proposed by the hon. Member would have the effect of lessening the present expenditure. It was very doubtful whether it would have that effect. Local inquiries were anything but cheap, as was shown by the costs of Election Petitions, which used to be heard in London. Counsel who would be content with a refresher of 10 guineas in London expected 50 guineas in the country. If the House should consent to delegate its powers in the manner proposed, it would be necessary to lay down a scheme of policy for the guidance of the Commission. Such a Body would have to adopt either the American system, which allowed one railway to be made by the side of another, or to follow the practice of guarding against undue competition capital laid out with Parliamentary sanction. Before Parliament parted with its present powers, it ought to be clearly shown that the Body to whom those powers would be committed would give by its decisions as much satisfaction as had hitherto been given by the Committees. He trusted that the House would, at any rate, only part with its powers by way of experiment.

Mr. BAXTER: Sir, as one of the oldest Members of this House, and a close observer for 30 years of the working of the Parliamentary machine, I wish in a sentence to express a deep feeling of obligation to my hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) for having devoted so much time and attention to this subject; and also to express my cordial and complete concurrence in the Resolution which he has moved to-night. That Resolution falls naturally into three parts—first, it states that the system of Private Bill legislation requires reform; then it proposes the establishment of a tribunal, not to act altogether independently of Parliament, but to do the bulk of the work, which, I submit, is perfunctorily performed by the Private Bill Committees; and, in the third place, it proposes that Parliament should lay down a rule that it is not necessary in all cases that the evidence should be taken in London, but may, when circumstances permit of it, be taken on the spot. I was very glad to hear the speech delivered by the hon. Member who has just sat down (Sir John Kennaway), because he has not ventured to oppose the Resolution of my hon. Friend; but, on the contrary, has accepted the fact that the present system of conducting the Private Business of this House has been condemned by the public, and all he has done is to interpose cautions and objections which, I hope, will be listened to when, at a time not far distant, this system is changed. We are supposed here to be an Imperial Parliament, and yet a very large portion of the time of the House of Commons is devoted to objects not only of a quite local character, but of comparatively trifling importance. There might be some principle involved in the Ennerdale Railway, or the railway across the parks; but these were not questions to which a couple of evenings of the House of Commons ought to have been devoted. We met last year and altered our form of procedure in a very mild manner, as I humbly think and said at the time; and allow me to say now what I said then—that unless we are prepared to go a great deal further in that direction, we shall have an irresistible cry for Home Rule, not only from Ireland, but from Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom. My hon. Friend stated that the principal thing done in that Session was to create Grand Committees. Well, I look forward not only to these Committees being appointed year by year, but to the gradual extension of their work; and I put it to the House, if we are to continue the system of Grand Committees, how will it be possible to get Members to attend Private Bill Committees, and decide upon Railway and Gas Companies? I am sure that statement will be borne out by my right hon. Friend the Chairman of the Committee of Selection, who is very much put about to get Members at the present time. A tribunal, no doubt, will have to be extremely carefully appointed. My hon. Friend does not lay before the House any definite scheme, but says it is for the Government to bring forward legislation upon this subject. I am unable to see that there is very much difficulty. I am quite persuaded that a Committee of Gentlemen appointed by the Committee of Selection, or by this House—Members who have devoted for many years a great deal of attention to Private Bill Business—would be able to prepare a scheme which would be entirely acceptable to the House and satisfactory to the country. My hon. Friend has laid a good deal of stress upon inquiries being made occasionally or frequently in the localities interested, instead of in London. It is not proposed that in all cases evidence should be taken in the country; but in some cases it would be an enormous advantage. I must warn my hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs that he will encounter a good deal of opposition to his proposal, not only from gentlemen in London who have vested interests in having all the evidence taken here, but from many gentlemen from all parts of the United Kingdom who have been in the habit, year by year, of coming up to London at the public expense, and who seem, if you talk to them about this matter, to consider that as one of the rights of citizenship. This proposal of my hon. Friend, I warn him, will not be so popular in the country as he supposes. Nevertheless, I think it is a perfectly proper one. The expense of Private Bill Committees—you may defend it if you choose—is discreditable to us as a nation. I am quite sure that on the ground both of efficiency and economy it would be very desirable to hold local inquiries on the spot. A great deal of expenditure might be saved, and very useless and unnecessary journeys. The House, on former occasions, has declared its condemnation of the present system; and I earnestly hope that the Government and the House will pluck up a little courage to-night, and, by accepting the business-like Resolution of my hon. Friend, secure the desired change.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, that the hon. Gentleman, in his desire to call attention to a matter of the greatest importance and a real grievance, had used very strong language, because he spoke of the deadening influence of those Committees. But when he looked at the railways which had been created under the system, the hon. Gentleman would see that he had rather exaggerated. The hon. Gentleman had, however, done well to call attention to a subject which twelve years ago, in the opinion of the House, required attention. He himself looked at the matter in the same light as Lord Winmarleigh, then Colonel Wilson Patten, when, as Chairman of the Committee of Selection, he occupied the post which he (Sir John Mowbray) now held. Colonel Wilson Patten, speaking on Private Bill legislation on the 22nd of March, 1872, said that great difficulty was experienced owing to the small number of Members from which the Committees were selected, that none of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches could be selected at all, and that there were sometimes as many as 21 or 22 Members on one Select Committee. There was an increasing indisposition on the part of new Members to serve on Private Bill Committees. One said he was sent to the House to attend to Imperial questions, another that he was between 50 and 60, and was approaching the time when he should be entitled to exemption. But there was no such rule now about exemption. Some 40 years ago Sir Robert Peel said that private Members were to learn their business in Parliament by attending Private Bill Committees. There were, however, every year increasing difficulties on the part of the Committee of Selection to find Members willing to serve. It was vain to tell him that the number of Private Bills was less last year than in former years, for there was every year an immense mass of work to be got through, and an increasing indisposition on the part of Members to do the work. The number of Select Committees was increasing. There was hardly a subject which it was not proposed to refer to a Select Committee. Then there were the Grand Committees. His hon. Friend the Member for South Devon (Sir John Kennaway) had said that the Grand Committees might not be so active this year. That might be so; but the House had resolved that there should be these Grand Committees, and 163 able and competent Members had been told off to sit on them, and they naturally said they could not be in two places at once. Then there was another matter—the number of Royal Commissions. There was a Royal Commission for improving the dwellings of the labouring classes—in fact, there were Royal Commissions of all sorts, upon which the most active Members of the House and of the Front Benches sat. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Dodson), who for many years had been Chairman of Ways and Means, had, he believed, prepared a scheme, some 12 years ago, for dealing with this subject; and as there was no one who had greater experience in this matter than that right hon. Gentleman, the Government would be very well able to propose a plan. Let the House have a small Committee to deal with the question, and let them say that it was the duty of the Government to come before the Committee with a definite scheme. He hoped the hon. Member for Haddington Burghs would be satisfied with having brought the subject forward, and that he would not think it necessary to pledge the House to any particular principle on that occasion.

Mr. LAING said, he thought that the experience he had had as a Member of the Railway Commission, as a barrister practising at the Parliamentary Bar, as a Member of many Committees of that House, and lastly as Chairman of a Railway Company, constantly involved in contests before Parliamentary Committees, would enable him to point out the real difficulty there was in adopting the proposal of delegation to a new tribunal outside Parliament. If all Private Bill legislation consisted of local and comparatively trivial matter, and of mere questions of facts or evidence, no doubt that delegation might be adopted with considerable advantage; but by far the larger portion of such legislation dealt with matters which really involved public policy a great deal more than mere facts or evidence. Railway legislation was, no doubt, the most important class of Private Bill legislation. It was one of the largest questions of public policy it was possible to conceive. The amount of capital involved in railways, according to the last Return, was £740,000,000 sterling, and the passengers numbered 624,000,000, of whom 533,000,000 were third-class passengers. There were probably not less than 1,000,000 shareholders in the railways of the United Kingdom, and the amount of public travelling was about equal to 20 journeys a-year for every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom. It was necessary to provide the cheapest travelling consistent with public safety and a fair return to investors, and that question clearly turned upon matters of principle and policy, and not upon matters of detail. Supposing we had a revival of trade in the next few years, with an increased prosperity of railways, and a scheme were brought forward for a rival scheme to the London and North-Western going from London to Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, close alongside the existing line, could anybody conceive of that scheme, involving property to the value of a very great many millions sterling, being referred to the Railway Commissioners? He could not conceive a question in which the public were more largely interested, or with regard to which, if a mistake were made in legislation, they would suffer more in future years. That was a question which almost equalled in magnitude the Budget of the year, or a good many municipal reforms. He was not sure if a Representation of the People Bill involved much larger issues. On such questions as the creation of a new and large line of railway, no tribunal would have any weight or authority, unless it was represented by a Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons. Many years ago, when he was at the Board of Trade, an attempt was made to create a tribunal by which the Board of Trade should make Reports to the Committees, pointing out the bearings of the Bills on public interests. That tribunal was as good a one as was likely to be created; but it broke down, because the parties interested had not confidence in the decisions, which were not given by Parliament, or by Committees representing Parliament. He did not say that the present system was perfect, or anything like it; and he thought the great defect was that the public interest was not sufficiently represented. The contests before Committees were contests between two opposing parties, fighting for their own interests, and with no one to represent the public. But, at the same time, and he spoke in the hearing of many Railway Directors, who would concur with him in saying that, on the whole, the decisions of these Committees had been very fair as between the contending parties, and that the questions brought before them had been very thoroughly thrashed out. Still, it was necessary in some way to strengthen the system, so that questions of public policy should be kept better in view. Therefore, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that this was a large and complicated question, which required to be taken up by the Government, and referred to a Select Committee or a Grand Committee. The one suggestion he would make was that the question might be considered, whether it might not be possible to amalgamate the Committees of the two Houses, and have in each case one Joint Committee, and so reduce the labours of Members of the two Houses by one-half. He did not think the House could pass the Resolution now proposed while the matter remained in its present state; and while considering that the House was much indebted to the hon. Member for bringing the matter forward, he thought it would be well if the Government could, in another Session, when they would, perhaps, have more time, endeavour to prepare a scheme which would be more practical than that of his hon. Friend, which he was afraid could only be called a pious aspiration.

MR. GREGORY said, he was afraid his acquaintance with Parliamentary Committees was of quite as ancient a date as that of his hon. Friend (Mr. Laing). It commenced in 1840, and only terminated at the period when he had the honour of entering the House as a Member. Of course, during that period considerable changes—and he might say considerable improvements—had taken place in the tribunals before which he had formerly to practise. Parliament also, during that time, was relieved of a considerable amount of that Business which before that relief took place it was compelled to deal with, because the system of Provisional Orders was introduced; and that met the objection which had been urged that, to a considerable extent, Parliament was called on to deal with matters of local or trivial interest and importance. This was, to a great extent, dealt with by Provisional Orders issued by the Board of Trade, and confirmed by the House. Another thing his experience before Committees led him to mention, and that was that Parliamentary Committee contests had not repressed trade and enterprize, as was stated by the Mover of this Motion. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Craig-Sellar) particularly referred to Ireland, which country, he said, had suffered so very much from the withdrawal of capital, and failure in the development of her resources in consequence of the great expense of conducting a Bill through Committee. Now, he (Mr. Gregory) remembered, during the period he was in practice, that he was engaged on Irish Bills over and over again, and certainly the Parliamentary contest did not prevent the introduction of capital and enterprize into Ireland. Railway Bills, Gas Bills, Water Bills, Improvement Bills of various kinds, were brought into the House, because there was confidence in the future of Ireland. It was not the true reason to give that the investment of capital in Ireland had been checked by the expense of obtaining powers from Parliament; but the check had come from the want of confidence in the country itself. As regarded England, they knew there had been no great check to enterprize in consequence of promoters having to approach Parliament for the necessary powers; but, on the contrary, the Bills had increased both in number and in the magnitude of the capital involved. According to his experience, the tribunal to whom these Bills were submitted was not, on the whole, unsatisfactory. There was the Panel of Chairmen, for which competent Chairmen were selected year after year, with their traditions and experience to guide them, and precedents upon which they could act; and associated with the Chairmen were three or four Gentlemen selected from the House. He would not say there was not a growing difficulty in obtaining Members to sit; but he was sure that difficulty could be met by the suggestion thrown out that they should not rely on a single Committee, but have a Joint Committee of both Houses. When this proposal was made some years ago he entertained some doubt of it; but experience had altered his opinion in favour of such an arrangement. Some years ago a Committee was selected from the two Houses for the purpose of considering some large schemes for the amalgamation of some of the large Railway Companies, three Members being selected from the House of Lords and three from the Commons. Of the latter he happened to be one, why he did not know; but happily those who sat beside him were Members very well versed in their Business, and formed a somewhat strong tribunal. That Committee sat on these schemes, and heard the evidence fairly and fully; but he remembered in one case an attempt was made to get the scheme passed as an unopposed one, the opposition being withdrawn. That, however, did not satisfy the Committee, or in any way affect their decision. They considered they represented public interests, and were determined to have the case fully discussed, and on the showing of the promoters the Committee threw out the scheme, and several others were dealt with in the same way. Now, if that Committee had been unsatisfactory having regard to the large interests concerned, some appeal would have been made to Parliament; but the finding of the Committee was never contested, and not a word was said about it in either House. Experience, then, was in favour of the proposal for an amalgamated Committee of the two Houses. By that means material relief would be given to the Committee of Selection in nominating Members to serve. But what was suggested by the hon. Member (Mr. Craig-Sellar)? He suggested that the Railway Commission should deal with certain Bills, a sort of roving Commission to deal with others, and special Commissions to deal with Scotch and Irish Business. Now, the Railway Commission would certainly not be a satisfactory tribunal for England. And would there be much lessening of expense by this reference to special tribunals, even if they sat locally? He very much doubted it. In the first place, the hon. Gentleman's scheme would not touch the preliminary expenses, the surveys, the notices, and general getting up of the scheme. Those would be common to both systems, whether an inquiry took place before a Commission or before a Committee of the House. And where were the great expenses subsequently? It would be said the fees to counsel and witnesses. If they had undertakings with large capital they would have heavy fees to counsel, for the promoters would have the very best in their Profession, and their labours must be remunerated at the highest rates. The same observation applied to the evidence of experts, the expense of which had increased materially of late years. Engineers, chemists, and analysts were paid higher than they were years ago, and they would not reduce their charges by the experiment of a country Commission. Indeed, if the inquiry were held in the country he was inclined to think the expenses would be heavier. Counsel and experts would require higher fees for travelling. There would be all the hotel and travelling expenses, and possibly these gentlemen would be detained in the county town many days before they could give evidence. He would not say the present system could not be improved, and was very much of the opinion of his right hon. Friend (Sir John Mowbray), that a proposal in reference to the subject should emanate from the Government, and be fairly considered by a Committee composed of experienced Members. Such an investigation would be valuable, and might lead to a result which would remove all the difficulties complained of; but he did not believe the proposal the House now had before it would lead to more efficiency or to a reduction of expense. Expenses might be lessened in other ways. Fees to experts were, perhaps, too high, and even to counsel. [Mr. WARTON: No, no!] Well, that was a matter upon which he could entertain his own opinion. At all events, if he was right, it was a matter that could be dealt with. He did not wish to press this at all; but he would support his right hon. Friend (Sir John Mowbray) in pressing the importance of the subject on the consideration of the Government, without pledging themselves to the particular scheme now before them.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, that, as one who had served for many years on Committees of the House, he thought they should pause before they adopted this proposal. He had some experience in the active Business of the House. Twenty years ago, an attempt was made to lighten the labours of Select Committees by substituting separate inquiries through Referees to be then first established. He sat on the Commission then appointed, together with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. They worked like slaves, gave reasons for their decisions, and laboured every day in the week through a whole Session upon preliminary inquiries; but they found in the end that those inquiries did not shorten the labours of the Committees one jot. They were, therefore, discontinued. He mentioned this to show that mere preliminary inquiries did not give any guarantee that they would in any way shorten the labours of Parliament. As to the question of defects in the present system, he agreed largely with the hon. Member (Mr. Craig-Sellar), and the public were of opinion that the system was liable to great defects. From the first time he had been in Parliament the public mind had been agitated in order to find a substitute for the present system; but no person had yet proposed any scheme to remedy the evils complained of, or provide anything better for the system which now prevailed. There had, however, been some advantages in the system, and he did not agree with the hon. Member as to these Select Committees being so weak. He had sat on Bills in which a dozen counsel were engaged, and had had to face them all; but he had not found them so very troublesome. On the contrary, he had always found them ready to give assistance to the Committee. There were some people who gave a great deal of trouble—namely, the agents who flooded them with evidence, which it was difficult to check; but he thought this was an evil that would arise even more largely if Private Bills were sent before a tribunal of the country. After all, the Select Committee was an elastic tribunal, and the decisions of the Committees one year were often quite the opposite of decisions of Committees in the following year; but there were advantages in that, for great questions of public policy often arose, and the policy of the country frequently varied. The greatest of all the difficulties in this matter was that of getting Members who could work consistently with the other duties of Parliament, and it might become necessary for Parliament to introduce some changes in view of that. He did not believe that it would be found possible to constitute a satisfactory tribunal outside of Parliament. Even the hon. Gentleman who introduced the subject hesitated at suggesting this, because his proposal was in favour of an intermediate course. The hon. Gentleman admitted that the question of principle must be decided in both Houses. Questions like the water supply of the Metropolis involved matters of principle as well as details, and Parliament would never consent to delegate its power of deciding on them. All these Bills, therefore, would require to be considered by Parliament as a preliminary to their being referred to the new tribunal; and the result, as it appeared to him, would be to increase debates in both Houses. Then he did not see how the new tribunal could overtake all the Private Bills in one Session. Thereafter they would have them brought in one Session, be considered by the new tribunal in the course of the year, and then brought on again in the next Session. Neither labour nor expense would be saved so far. The hon. Member spoke of a nice little inquiry conducted in a town with a local Bar; but the great interests would not be satisfied with the local Bar. They had had some experience of this in connection with Election Petitions; and they found, as the result of introducing the local tribunals, that the expense was doubled and even trebled. Then there must be an appeal, so what the public were to gain he was quite at a loss to know. The hon. Member modestly said that he did not intend his proposition as final, and that he hoped the Government would come forward with a solution of the difficulty. Why, the Government had been invited to do so for the last 10 years. If the hon. Member would bring in a Bill, and see what scheme he could arrange in concert with the Government, he would be glad to suspend his opinion, and he believed the House would do the same; but he must say that it was rather a lame conclusion to arrive at to say—"Here is a difficulty, but we cannot trust ourselves to devise a remedy, and must leave it to the Government." He could only express a negative opinion in regard to the proposition of the hon. Member, and express the hope that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster would be able to throw some light on the subject.

Viscount LYMINGTON said, he objected, on public grounds, to the proposal to refer Private Bills to any tribunal outside that House. Reference had been made to the waste of public time occupied in the discussion by the House of such questions as the Ennerdale Railway and the Southampton Cemetery. He fully endorsed the view that the House was not the proper place in which the details of a purely private or of a local matter could be conveniently discussed. At the same time, there were often raised in Private Bills, as there happened to be in the cases alluded to, questions of principle—questions of general importance—which he should be very sorry to see relegated to an outside Body in the nature of a Commission. The question of balancing public rights with private interest involved all sorts of conflicting principles; and to impose on a delegated authority the duty of reconciling these principles, and of administering powers at once so tremendous in their relation to the State and to the individual, would be to lay upon it an almost insuperable tax. He admitted there were faults in our present system. For instance, no rules of evidence were imposed upon the Parliamentary lawyers, and the cost of our present procedure was excessive. No doubt there were many defects, and he believed some might be met by appointing Joint Committees of the two Houses on Private Bills; but until a definite scheme were proposed likely to commend itself to the House and the country it would be premature to adopt the Resolution.

Mr. DODDS said, he considered that the present system was in many respects unsatisfactory, and if the Mover and Seconder had propounded to the House any feasible scheme in substitution of that which existed at the present time, he would have been very happy to have voted with them. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Davey) had suggested the appointment of a Commission comprised of an engineer, a financier, and a gentleman of the Long Robe, to go down to the country to inquire into the different private schemes which were from time to time promoted. But how many of such Commissions would be required to inquire into the two or two hundred Private Bills which were introduced into Parliament in the course of a Session? If there could be established local tribunals, such as were suggested, he should be glad; but he doubted their feasibility. The trial of Election Petitions was a very different matter. Usually, 19 out of the 20 witnesses resided in the immediate locality; but that was not the case with Private Bills. The great majority of the witnesses who were called before Select Committees were skilled witnesses, who, for the most part, resided in London, and who could not be got to go into the country except at great expense. It had occurred to him that there was one plan which might be adopted with advantage. From time to time, as in the case of the Channel Tunnel Bill of last year, and in other cases, Joint Committees of the two Houses of Parliament had been appointed to inquire into the merits of private schemes. He could not understand why the same principle should not be adopted in the case of all the Private Bills introduced into Parliament. He trusted that his suggestion would receive the serious consideration of the Chancellor of the Duchy.

Mr. PULESTON said, that the Motion only dealt with a part of the much larger question—the question—namely, of the whole Business of the House. It seemed to him that the Government might very well take into consideration the system adopted at Washington, in the United States Congress, in which every Bill was relegated to a Committee. They had a Standing Committee appointed by the Speaker on almost every subject, every Member of Congress being on one or more of those Committees.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE said, the right hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) had observed very truly in his speech that the chief opposition against such a measure as that proposed by his hon. Friend would be on the part of persons who had vested interests in the present system, such as Parliamentary solicitors and barristers, the officials of the great railways, the experts who gave evidence before those Committees, and people of that kind; and they had seen some indication of that already in the speeches that had been delivered. They had seen the barristers and Railway Directors arrayed in opposition to the proposal. It was quite easy to understand why such persons should prefer the existing system; but the matter was one that ought to be settled by the public, and he was satisfied that the public, especially the public of Scotland, were strongly in favour of a material change. The further a place was from London the more keenly it felt the necessity for a change. In Scotland, for instance, they could not come to Parliament for a Private Bill without bringing up lawyers, experts, and local witnesses an average distance of 500 miles. The consequence was that in many cases people had to forego their Bills altogether, on account of the cost which must attend obtaining them. He could add many cases of the same kind as had been mentioned by his hon. Friend the Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar), in which localities had to do without much-needed improvements. Several hon. Members opposite had endeavoured to show that there was no foundation for the complaint by referring to the great amount of legislation that was done, and the great development of railway enterprize throughout the country. But it was not in connection with great public measures that the hardship was felt so much as in regard to small improvements in small localities, which were of great importance to those localities, though not of general interest, and which could not be carried out in Scotland without incurring an expenditure equal to two or three years' rates of the district. In the interest of justice and sound policy, it was the duty of the House to attend to the interests of smaller bodies and remote localities as much as to those of wealthy Corporations and central communities. Last year the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in opposing the Motion brought forward by his hon. Friend, especially that part of it referring to local tribunals, had pointed out the small number of Bills that came from Scotland as a reason why no such Body should be appointed for that country. But the smallness of the number of Bills was due to the present system. It was the expense and the difficulties to be encountered which prevented such improvements. He had no doubt that they would have many more Bills submitted to any tribunal they might set up, before which schemes involving no great amount of money could be disposed of without incurring great expense. One argument in favour of change had not been mentioned—namely, that the present system gave a great influence, a preponderating power, to large Companies and Corporations. The purse of a large railway or a large Corporation was practically exhaustless. It could meet the expense and carry on the proceedings for many days without inconveniencing itself; but an unfortunate private person was in a very different position. He had known cases where private persons whose interests were seriously affected by proposed public works, and who might have set up a strong case why those works should not be carried out, had been prevented by the heavy expense from giving effect to their objections. In justice to that class of persons and to the small burghs, they required some very material change. His hon. Friend had referred to public opinion in Scotland on the subject. At the great national meeting held not long ago in Edinburgh on the subject of Scottish legislation generally, the feeling was unanimously expressed that some change of this kind ought to be made in justice to distant places. The only answer that they had heard to-day to that demand was on the part of Gentlemen who had more or less remote connection with the law, to the effect that the expense of investigations conducted there would not be less than they were at present. They founded that argument on the assumption that it would be necessary to send down first-rate counsel and first-rate experts from London. Well, there were first-rate counsel elsewhere than in London; and if a tribunal of this kind were set up in Scotland, the Scottish Bar could afford men quite as able to carry on the work as any London counsel. He believed the same was true in regard to Ireland. So, likewise, in the matter of experts. Indeed, he thought it would be a positive advantage that some difficulty would be placed in the way of the employment of the very highest men except in the most important cases. For all ordinary purposes there was plenty of talent in the country to deal with these inquiries; and, conducted in that way, they would not cost 10 per cent of what they cost at present.

MR. DODSON said, he cordially joined with those who had bestowed praise on his hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) for having again brought this very important subject under the attention of the House, and for the very able, lucid, and interesting manner in which he had done so. Notwithstanding the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, he thought anyone who had sat with him (Mr. Dodson) in that House for some years must know that if there was one man in that House who had shown more anxiety than another to effect root-and-branch reform in the system of private legislation, it was himself, and he thought he was hardly open to the rebuke which the hon. Member had passed upon him in that respect. It was quite true that he had not been able to support in its integrity the proposition made last year by his hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs. But as to the first part of the hon. Member's last Resolution—that the system of private legislation called for the attention of the Government and of Parliament, and required reform—he had cordially concurred in that part of it, and concurred in it still. The present system of private legislation was open to the objections that had been brought against it—namely, that it was costly, lengthy, and haphazard in its character; and if it was not more so than it really was, it was owing to the ability, the industry, and the self-devotion of the Members of that House, and especially of the Chairmen, who served upon those Committees. There was another matter that had not been spoken of to-night, and that was that every Bill had to go through the ordeal of a Committee of each House. Usually, when a case was tried before two tribunals, the second tribunal was in the nature of an Appellate Court, and there was an appeal from the first to the second, on the ground that the facts had not all been brought to light, or on the ground of some error on the part of the first Court. But in the case of the Committees of the two Houses, it was in no sense an appeal. One of those Courts was in no way superior to the other. They were co-ordinate tribunals; and the case was tried before the second, not by way of appeal, but simply by way of the dissatisfied party who had failed with the first insisting, if his purse was long enough, on taking his chance with the second. It had been said—"Why should you not have recourse to a Joint Committee of the two Houses, and let every Bill be settled once for all by one Committee?" The objection to this was that it would in no way provide for that which ought to be provided for—namely, the means of obtaining an appeal should there be grounds for it. Another reason given for dealing with this subject was the desirability of relieving Members from a class of work for which most of them were not especially suited, and setting them free for other and more important matters that were more truly the work of Members of Parliament. It must be remembered in connection with this that the proper Parliamentary work of Members was constantly growing year by year. Parliamentary questions necessarily increased with the growth of the country and with their closer political and commercial relations with other parts of the world; it, therefore, became more difficult year by year to find an adequate number of Members able to devote themselves to the task of private legislation. Those were reasons which appeared to him, amongst others that had been urged, to constitute grounds for a reform of private legislation. With regard to the Amendment which had been submitted by his hon. Friend, they must remember that if they agreed to this Resolution they would be bound, not by the speech of his hon. Friend, but by the terms of the Resolution; and he must say that the second part of the Resolution, whether his hon. Friend so intended it or not, appeared to him to point too much in the direction of that which they had had experience of already, and not very satisfactory experience—namely, preliminary inquiries. They had had a system of preliminary local inquiries established by Lord Dalhousie. It was supposed that that would relieve the Committees of this House of a very great deal of work; but it had simply added the expense and labour of a preliminary inquiry to the double trial before the two Committees of the Houses. The experience of the Referees, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke), had been in the same direction, and that attempt had had to be abandoned after a trial of one or two years. He would not go into the scheme that he had himself proposed many years ago for the reform of private legislation; but he would simply say that it appeared to him the main points to be aimed at in relieving Parliament of this labour, and giving the public a cheaper and more efficient system than it had at present, was to establish an external tribunal which should in the first instance hear all parties and settle the schemes, and that the schemes so settled should be subject to an appeal to the strongest Parliamentary tribunal that could be found. It appeared to him that that was the key-stone of any real amendment in the present system. As to the course which he, speaking on behalf of the Government, felt constrained to propose to the House in reference to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington

Burghs, he very much agreed with what had fallen from his right hon. Friend the Chairman of the Committee of Selection (Sir John Mowbray) in respect to one very important point. He had always thought that if any effectual amendment was to be made in the Rules of the House as to the conduct of either Public or Private Business it must be submitted to the House on the responsibility of a Government. He agreed with his right hon. Friend that if private legislation was to be substantially amended, it must be when the Government had time and leisure, and determination, to take the initiative and make the subject its own. He need not say that it was out of the question that the Government should undertake to do anything of the kind in the present Session. That was not saying that the Government ought not to do it when it could find time and opportunity to give the subject the consideration it deserved, and the House had the time and opportunity to entertain it. He would not be seduced into committing himself to the proposals of his hon. Friend; but, while declining to accept those proposals, he would not be understood to preclude them from future consideration, or to pass any condemnation upon them whatever. Technically, no doubt, the question before the House was the Amendment of his hon. Friend; but, practically, as they all knew, the question to be decided was whether they should to-night proceed with the Business of Supply. Therefore, in saying "No" to the Amendment of his hon. Friend, he was simply hoping that the Government Business for to-night, which was Supply, might be proceeded with with the least possible delay.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—ABERYSTWITH COLLEGE.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. RENDEL, who had given Notice that he would call attention to the present position of Aberystwith College; and to move—

"That the College of Aberystwith having, notwithstanding the Report of the Departmental Committee, been left out of the scheme for higher education in Wales, this House is of opinion that the injury to the cause of education in the Principality, and discouragement to a great portion of the Welsh people, will result, unless measures are taken to place that College, in respect of State recognition and support, on an equal footing with the Colleges at Cardiff and Bangor,"

said: Mr. Speaker, my first desire, and indeed my first duty, in regard to the Motion standing in my name, is to express the gratitude which, in common, I believe, with every one of the Welsh Members, I bear to Her Majesty's Government for the action they have taken in the promotion of the cause of education in the Principality. We do not forget the significant utterance of the Prime Minister on the last occasion when the subject of higher education in Wales was under discussion in this House. It was during the debate so happily brought about in the last Parliament by the hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian), and so unhappily fruitless at the time. The right hon. Gentleman then stated that for two centuries past nothing Welsh had received any consideration at the hands of Parliament. That is no longer true. Welsh affairs are now become matters of interest to Her Majesty's Government, and may be brought under the notice of this House with every chance of a fair and a kindly hearing. One of the earliest acts of the present Administration was the appointment of a Departmental Committee to examine and report upon the whole subject of education. Not only is Wales indebted to the Government for the appointment of that Committee—it is even more deeply indebted to the Committee itself. Never was an inquiry more thorough and exhaustive, and I doubt whether it would be possible for any country to show an Educational Report more admirable and complete. Again, Sir, the Principality is also deeply indebted to my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (Mr. Mundella) for the generous alacrity and sympathy with which he threw himself into the work of giving prompt effect to every recommendation of the Committee to which effect could be given without previous legislation, and in particular for securing to Wales at once the handsome grant of £8,000 a-year in aid of higher education. I do not stand here, Sir, to air any grievance, or to make any complaint. If anything I may say seems to bear that complexion, it is the fault of my expression, and certainly not of my intention. My case is simply this: that the University College at Aberystwith, as a result of the kind intentions of the Government and the operation of their scheme for higher education, somehow or other has fallen through; and my hope is that I may be able to present sufficient reasons to the Government and to this House to induce the Government to amplify their scheme to such an extent as to enable Aberystwith College to maintain its existence and success. That Institution, Sir, has an almost touching history. From time immemorial the Welsh people have been devoted to learning. I do not know that that devotion has ever been signalized in a manner more remarkable and pathetic than when by long, by strenuous, and unassisted efforts, the people established for themselves the College at Aberystwith. Sir, the College might almost be said to have been built with the pence of the poor. It was the noble work of a noble Welshman and a valued public servant now gone from us; and for ten years it has done its work in a field which, if not the most fertile that might have been chosen for it, was, at any rate, the field that seemed the most suitable and the fairest for the then single University College of Wales. Sir, there is abundant evidence to show the peculiar and enduring affection of Wales for the Aberystwith College. It was founded in the year 1872, and by the year 1875 so much was the national sentiment centred upon it that no less than 256 public Bodies—that is, Town Councils, Local Boards, and so forth, representing, it is computed, more than two-thirds of the population of Wales, memorialized the then Government in its behalf, and yet without effect. The debate, to which I have already alluded, in 1879, though wisely directed to larger issues, turned very much upon the claims and destinies of Aberystwith. Almost every person entitled to speak for Wales in that discussion pleaded the cause of Aberystwith, yet still without result. Accordingly the case of the College was fully considered by the Departmental Committee. Indeed, how could it be otherwise? But for the College, the Committee would probably never have come into being. The President of the College was the President of the Committee; and one of the Members of the Committee, whose presence on it gave the greatest satisfaction to Wales, was my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard), who was one of the first friends of the College, and who has made for himself an almost patriarchal position amongst his countrymen. It is needless to say that the Departmental Committee not only considered the claims, but took care to protect the interests of Aberystwith College. In their Report on the higher education branch of the question, they approved the principle of Provincial Colleges such as Aberystwith, for they saw the necessity in Wales of bringing the teacher to the pupil. They recommended that a second one should be established, and that it should be placed in Glamorganshire, where a highly concentrated population afforded the best scope for it. And this they called the College for South Wales. They went on to declare that the College at Aberystwith, whether retained on its present site or removed to Carnarvon or Bangor, must be accepted as the College for North Wales. And they advised that £4,000 a-year should be given to each College. To all these recommendations my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council on Education proceeded to give immediate effect. The question of the site for the College of South Wales was happily settled, and the £4,000 a-year duly granted. The choice also of site for the North Wales College was determined. But what then happened? An entirely new Institution was created there, to which the other £4,000 a-year was promised in due course; and thus Aberystwith College, which has enjoyed the £4,000 a-year in the meanwhile, must now lose it, and will apparently be left out in the cold. Sir, the result of this misadventure has been a spontaneous movement from end to end of Wales, and a warm awakening of the unfailing attachment of Wales to the national and popular Institution. Within the short space of time since the danger was realized I have record of no less than 133 public meetings, at which resolutions have been unanimously passed, calling upon the Government for aid and recognition for Aberystwith. At least 100 public Bodies have passed similar resolutions, and petitions are coming in with increasing volume. Among those that I have myself presented is one signed by over 1,000 workmen of Festiniog, always found true to the cause of education in every part of Wales. Sir, I can assure the House that these Resolutions and Petitions and Memorials might easily have been multiplied to almost any extent; but I would ask leave to observe that when the honour was done me of being asked to move Parliament in the interest of Aberystwith, I made it a point to take no part whatever in relation to any of these meetings or Memorials, lest I should give them the least appearance of a factitious character. No doubt, a little more lapse of time would have led to the strengthening of my hands here, and even fuller evidence of the opinion of Wales on this matter. But the House is well aware of the exigencies under which any private Member labours in bringing questions before Parliament, and I took the day I could obtain, not that which I myself might have chosen. Sir, I can see now that we are all in somewhat of a dilêmma. The Government has provided a liberal grant, but it has expended it. The Committee provided for the retention of Aberystwith University, but it has somehow been displaced. Thus there is no money available; and the appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for more must be made under peculiar difficulties. Sir, no wonder that in these circumstances excellent arguments are to be found for doing nothing. I hope the House will bear with me while I touch briefly upon some of them, seeing that the Rules of Debate give me no opportunity of reply. It is said, Sir, that this is somewhat of a sectarian movement. I am not about to enter upon the thorny ground of local sectarian feeling; but, speaking generally, I will confess the surprise and regret with which I hear Englishmen sometimes assume that because Wales is Nonconformist she must be, therefore, what is called sectarian. Why, Sir, to take a broad illustration which will come home to this House. In Wales the Nonconformists are to the Churchmen in the ratio of four or five to one. [An hon. MEMBER: Ten to one.] [Mr. DILLWYN: Twelve to one.] But, nevertheless, Wales sends to this House her Representatives whose creeds are in an almost inverse ratio. Compare this with the action of England and Scotland. The Roman Catholic population of Great Britain is larger than the whole population of Wales. Judging by mere numbers, it has a right to some 25 Members in this House. Nevertheless, neither England nor Scotland returns a single Roman Catholic Member to this House. [Several hon. MEMBERS: Yes; one.] No, indeed, that is left to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Another argument is that if you assist Aberystwith in this matter you will be doing an injury to Bangor. Sir, I am satisfied that this is an argument which has not been used and will not be used in this House by any real friend of Bangor. I say that there is no jealousy betweenBangor andAberystwith. It is not difficult to find evidence to support this assertion. In the first place, you have the fact that many gentlemen are common to the Governing Bodies of both Colleges, and to the satisfaction of each. In the next place, I may appeal to a remarkable and most able document forming the Memorial of the Council of Aberystwith College to the Prime Minister, and just submitted to him. That Memorial conveys a striking statement of the case for Aberystwith; and its prayer, if not in terms, is in effect in harmony with my Motion. Well, Sir, 10 out of the 12 Members for North Wales have endorsed their approval upon that Memorial; and if they do not represent the opinion of North Wales, I do not know who is to do so. In the face of such evidence it would be impossible to urge, in this House at least, for a moment that North Wales has any anxiety in behalf of Bangor, or any desire that Aberystwith should suffer in the supposed interests of Bangor. A third argument that has been used against Aberystwith is that two Colleges are sufficient for Wales. It is difficult to deal with an argument of this kind, because it is founded on opinion only, and opinion which is necessarily arbitrary. Of course, its force depends upon the source of the opinion and the experience or knowledge on which it is founded. I give no opinion; but I may observe that opinions on this point of apparently equal authority are conflicting. Some say one College would be better than two, others insist on a third College for Mid Wales; and, again, others think Wales is not ripe for Colleges at all, and that we ought to turn our whole attention to intermediate education. Sir, where opinion at the best is arbitrary, and is, in fact, conflicting, it would be strange if Wales was, on the strength of it alone, to consent to the extinction of valuable and honoured existing and working appliances. It is true that the Report of the Committee may be cited in support of this opinion; but I urge that the Committee's Report, while recommending Provincial Colleges, and for the present two only, contemplated expressly the utilization of Aberystwith, and I infer from that Report that had the case been presented to them which has in effect occurred, of Aberystwith College being in danger of falling through, the Committee would have saved Aberystwith even as a third College for Wales. And if so at the date of their Report, still more so now, when the decision of the eight Theological Colleges to send their students to the new Colleges for their Arts courses is likely to largely reinforce those Colleges, when we are three years nearer to an Intermediate Education Bill, and when the movement in favour of higher education has, through the generous action of the Government, on their recommendations, been stimulated beyond all expectation. The last argument for doing nothing which I will notice, Sir, is this—that a present demand for more money would injure our prospects of obtaining an adequate grant for intermediate education. I never hear an argument of this kind without regret. Why are we to mix up what is to follow with what we have got in hand? It is a blind business to try to make a better bargain for the future by giving up something in the present. The cases of higher and intermediate education must obviously stand and be treated each upon its own merits, and in any case we have the interests of an existing institution to consider, which you are asking us to suffer to die in the interests of an unborn one. Sir, such an argument is a kind of scarecrow argument by which Wales will refuse to be frightened from the corn; and if it be used as a threat, Wales will be tempted to rejoin that she remembers how and whence Ireland obtained £1,000,000 for intermediate education, and that she, too, can look to a Church Fund Surplus for such purposes. Sir, it is evident that something must be done for Aberystwith, and it seems to me that the only course left open is to place the College upon an equality with the other Colleges in respect of State recognition and aid. What else can you do? Some say you should transform it—that is, devote it to the education of women. It is true that the educational destitution of Wales is as grave in respect of women as of men, and I trust that Aberystwith may in time have grafted upon it ancillary appliances for the education of women. But it is as a men's College that we have to deal with it now, and I am sure that Wales will not hear of its total transformation. After all, the men are the breadwinners, and must have the prior consideration. Another course proposed is to transfer Aberystwith—that is, I presume, to Bangor. But it is obviously too late to take that step. Such a course would not mean a combination of the two Colleges, and a migration of the Institution would mean simply the liquidation of Aberystwith, its extinction as an Institution, and the handing over to Bangor of the balance of the material assets. The only course open to the Government is then to endow Aberystwith—even though that means to increase the grant of £8,000. Now, Sir, I am not about to cavil at that amount, or to question how far it is in precise proportion to those which Scotland and Ireland enjoy, beyond saying this—that obviously it is not up to the just proportion, taking population alone into account. I prefer to urge that Wales is entitled, at the hands of this House and of Great Britain, to special favour and indulgence in this matter. In the first place, Wales is a poor country, and I presume that the only principle on which a grant for higher education can be made out of public funds is based upon the advantage to the nation of helping a poor country to help itself. If you take the Income Tax Returns of Parliamentary Boroughs in England and in Wales, you will find that the middle classes of England are, by their own showing, nearly twice as well off as those in Wales. The Returns show an average of £24 a-head in England as against £13 a-head in Wales. Poor as Wales is in many or most parts by the dispensation of Providence, she is made poorer by the act—I might say the spoliation—of England. Her total endowments are, as compared with those of England, but one to five. The average endowments of an English county are £55,575 a-year, and of a Welsh county not £1,700. Per head of population the endowment comes to 1*s.* 9½*d.* in England and 4¼*d.* in Wales. In educational endowment the contrast is almost as great. It is 6½*d.* per head in England and scarcely over 2*d.* in Wales. As an Oxford Graduate, I am ashamed to reflect that the Colleges of Christ Church, All Souls, and University, which do nothing special for Wales, draw from the county which I have the honour to represent (Montgomeryshire) no less than £4,000 a-year; while that county, with 67,000 people, has but one Grammar School endowed with £120 a-year, and some 30 boys, and a total educational endowment, much frittered away, of only £750. Being thus denuded in favour of England of her endowments, Wales suffers further from exceptional burdens. One of these is her language, which, to say the least of it, she is entitled to retain; but which everyone will admit is and must be a heavy additional educational tax upon her. Again, she has to support her own religion, and without speaking of the vast sums she has expended in the creation of a vast religious machinery, she has the annually-recurring necessity to raise from her middle and poorer classes from £300,000 to £400,000 a-year for the maintenance of religious ministrations. Undoubtedly, these are burdens of which Wales does not complain. She bears them cheerfully and with pride, and would not have them taken from her. But they unquestionably limit her capacity to provide for other national needs, and increase her claim upon the State. Sir Hugh Owen once said that the average reward of talent and learning in Wales, whether in the pulpit or at the desk, did not exceed £200 a-year, and it certainly cannot be said that in Wales a career is open to talent. Take the service of the country, whether naval and military, or civil, into consideration; they are entered only by competitive examination early in life, and with educational tests. It is plain that Wales has an equal claim to this, perhaps the largest opening to merit which the country affords. Yet is it not clear that she is heavily handicapped in the race? But, Sir, I must come to closer and more practical issues, and upon practical grounds I urge the retention of Aberystwith. It may not have attracted in the past a great body of students, and it has not the population necessary to furnish night students in any number; but at least it has supplied the wants of the neighbourhood in a great degree, and done excellent work there. Three-fourths of the 459 students who have already passed through it have come from Mid Wales—one-sixth only from the farther North Wales. So local, so clannish are as yet the habits of the Welsh people, so difficult are they to move about, that it is safe to assert that should you deprive Mid Wales of Aberystwith you will put back for a full generation the higher education of at least three counties. But, Sir, there is a sentimental argument on which I am not afraid to rest. Sentiment in this matter is neither to be slighted nor disregarded. The present enthusiasm of the Welsh for education is the animating spirit necessary to give life to any Government action. You may provide the most perfect appliances and machinery, but without the life and breath of that enthusiasm they will prove barren and dead. Of that enthusiasm Aberystwith College was the first-fruits. It is, indeed, for all Wales its living expression and embodiment. To extinguish Aberystwith could not quench it, but would certainly chill it; and it is upon this ground in particular that I bespeak the favourable consideration of the House and the Government for the Resolution, which I will now read.

SIR. ROBERT CUNLIFFE: Sir, in supporting the appeal made to Her Majesty's Government on behalf of Aberystwith College, I also would bear testimony to the gratitude of the people of Wales to Her Majesty's Government, and especially to the Vice President of the Council on Education, for what they have done in respect of education in the Principality. And it is precisely because they appreciate that action of Her Majesty's Government that the people of Wales now make a special appeal on behalf of Aberystwith College. I think it will be admitted that my hon. Friend has stated the case on its behalf both temperately and forcibly; and I do not believe I could add anything to the presentment which he has made of it. I will turn, therefore, to the objections which may be urged against this Resolution. Now, Sir, there are two main objections which may be advanced against it. First, that inasmuch as the Government has already made a liberal contribution in aid of higher education in Wales, they can hardly be expected to give more. Secondly, that the establishment of a third College, so far from aiding, might be injurious to higher education, because experience might show that there would be a sufficient supply of students for two Colleges, but not for three, and that, in consequence, all three would suffer. I will take, first, the question of an increased grant. Sir, we all know it is a matter of difficulty, and properly so, to obtain money from the Treasury. It is, of course, the duty of the Government to be vigilant guardians of the public purse; but if an appeal may ever be made for a liberal, and even a generous consideration of an educational question, I hope I am not too sanguine in thinking it may be made for a portion of the country which is very poor, which has made most honourable exertions to help itself, and which, above all, has long been neglected in the matter of higher education. I need not repeat what has been said by my hon. Friend with regard to the sum of £71,000 and odd pounds, which, exclusive of the Government grant of £3,000, was the amount raised in Wales for Aberystwith College up to June, 1883, and the greater part of which was drawn from persons in the middle and humbler classes. That shows, at least, that Wales was in earnest in its desire for greater educational advantages. I would ask the House to bear in mind what has been done for Scotland and Ireland. Scotland, with a population not three times greater than Wales, receives for its Universities annually £18,992, and the Scottish Universities Bill proposes to raise that amount to £40,000. The Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh have received between them for building purposes £220,000. Ireland, with a population not quite four times greater, receives for its Colleges £22,783 annually. In addition to this the House will remember that £1,000,000 was appropriated out of the Irish Church Fund for intermediate education; and though, of course, this is not directly applied in aid of the Colleges, yet by fostering the intermediate schools it must largely help to produce the class of students they desire. And there is another consideration that deserves to be borne in mind in endeavouring to provide for the educational requirements of Wales—namely, the relative deficiency of its endowments as compared with England. Upon this point I would only quote these very few words from the Report of the Departmental Committee—

> "The educational endowments of Wales to those of England relatively to the population has been stated to us in evidence to be 1 to 3, and this appears to be an approximately correct estimate."

Without dwelling longer on this point, I venture to submit that Wales has some claim for further consideration from Her Majesty's Government. The other objection to which I have referred—that a third College might be injurious to the cause of higher education, because it might not attract sufficient students to justify its own existence, and yet draw enough from the other two to prejudice their success, is, I admit, one of much force if it can be sustained. But I think it can be shown that we need not fear this result. As regards Cardiff, I believe no one doubts of its success. It has, at this moment, 150 students; and the large population of Glamorganshire, amounting to over 500,000, might alone furnish a considerable supply. As regards Bangor—speaking as a member of its Council—we have good hope that our numbers will be sufficient; and I am sure my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) can have no doubt that the men of his county, who have so warmly and liberally supported the College, will not fail to avail themselves of it to the utmost of their power. But we have some figures to guide us upon this point. The number of students from the various counties in Wales since the opening of the Aberystwith College, in October, 1872, up to Lent term, 1884, shows a total of 459. Of these Northern Wales—that is, Anglesea, Carnarvon, Denbigh, and Flint—have supplied 70; Glamorgan and Monmouth, 44; England, 49; but Central Wales—that is, the counties from which Aberystwith is more easily reached—have sent no less than 296, and of these 183 have come from Cardiganshire alone. Now, Sir, it must be remembered that the population of Cardiganshire and the adjoining counties is the poorest in Wales; the figures show that these populations are

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most eager for education, and yet if Aberystwith is to be extinguished it is more than probable that a very large proportion of these poor and remote districts will remain outside the benefits which these new Colleges are intended to confer. I think, Sir, we may fairly conclude from the experience of the past that whilst Cardiff and Bangor will each draw their supply from those districts which lie most convenient to them, there will still remain an ample field for the usefulness of Aberystwith. And let me remind the House that, in judging of the degree of success that Aberystwith has had in the past, it is only fair to bear in mind that the College has laboured under the two great disadvantages of poverty and uncertainty as to its future; but give it the stability which will come from Government recognition, and the assistance of a Government grant, and I think we might confidently hope that it would take a very different position. The Memorial to the Prime Minister states that in—

> "The three years which elapsed between 1879 and 1882 it was only possible to set aside an average sum of £160 a-year for distribution in scholarships and prizes among a set of students as poor as any in the United Kingdom."

And to this there should be added that some portion of the income and assets of the College are conditional on its being retained at Aberystwith and attracting a certain Government grant. The hon. Member for the Cardigan Boroughs (Mr. D. Davies) has, on such conditions, offered £4,000 to the College, and £500 yearly for the next six years, if Government should give a competent grant; and his generous example will, no doubt, induce others to follow in his footsteps when they see that Aberystwith has the likelihood of a permanent position. Let me remind the House that the certainty of a Government grant has elicited £35,000 in subscriptions for Cardiff, and an almost equal amount for Bangor, and we may feel sure that similar results will follow in the case of Aberystwith. In spite of the disadvantages which it has had to contend against, the College has at this moment 95 students. There is no medical school, and no female students; and if, therefore, we exclude these two classes we find that it compares favourably with Liverpool, which in 1882 had 54; with Bristol, which had 74; and with Firth College, Sheffield, which had 83 male students. Sir, I need only say further on this point that the Memorial of the Governors of the College distinctly states that they would be willing to be judged by the result; and to accept a grant from the Government, which would be determinable if, after a fair trial and sufficient time, it should appear that the cause of higher education would not be advanced by the further continuance of the College. There is one other point well worth the consideration of the House. There is a disposition among the eight Theological Colleges of Wales to give the Arts education at a secular College, and this is a movement which I think the House would wish to encourage. Now, it appears that the Independent College at Brecon had almost decided to send its students to Aberystwith; but the doubt as to its future has led to the opening of negotiations with Cardiff. If, however, this doubt were removed, the central situation of Aberystwith would tend to increase so desirable and salutary a movement. In conclusion, I think the Government and my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education will feel, if they had ever any doubt upon this point, that the Resolution of my hon. Friend represents a deep and widespread desire in Wales for the retention of Aberystwith College. Out of 30 Members of Parliament who represent the Principality in this House, 26 have signed, and not one, I believe, is hostile to it. It cannot, therefore, be said that the feeling, of which this is a proof, belongs only to a Party or a section. We earnestly hope that Her Majesty's Government will make a favourable response to this appeal, and we can assure them that it would be gratefully accepted as a generous recognition of the just claims of the Welsh people.

MR. RICHARD: Sir, there can be no doubt that my hon. Friends who would have moved and seconded the Resolution on the Paper, if the Rules of the House had allowed them, represent a large body of opinion in Wales in favour of a continued grant to Aberystwith College. And this is no wonder, because Aberystwith was the creation of popular enthusiasm for education in Wales. The fact stated by my hon. Friend who has just sat down is a very significant fact to those who know the class of people from whom, for the most part, the money was got, that upwards of £70,000 has been contributed by the people of Wales towards this Institution. The College has an excellent and commodious building, with laboratories, class rooms, museum, and a library. It has a staff of most competent and efficient Professors, and a considerable number of students, who are increasing year by year. I had the honour and pleasure of being present and bearing some part in the inauguration of this College in 1872, and ever since, as a member of the Council, have watched its interests with great anxiety. Like many young Institutions, it has had to pass through somewhat fluctuating fortunes; but, on the whole, its progress has been steady and satisfactory. It may be said, and has been said, that we have not in Wales enough of what I may call the raw material for three Colleges—that is, a sufficient number of young persons of that class likely to avail themselves of the advantages of Collegiate education. That I frankly admit is a matter open to question, and I do not know how it can be solved except by making the experiment. But there are two or three considerations which I shall venture to submit to the House in favour of the affirmative view, which it is the more necessary to state as serving to correct certain grave misapprehensions which exist in England as to the state of things in Wales. There is a notion still widely prevalent that Wales is, for the most part, a pastoral and agricultural country, with a sparse, scattered, and poor population. And here I must differ a little from my hon. Friend who would have moved the Resolution about Wales being a very poor country. A hundred years ago, or even later, it might have been truly said that Wales was a thinly inhabited and poor country; but within the last 50 or 60 years there has been an immense increase of wealth and population. My noble Friend (Lord Aberdare), whose services to the cause of Welsh education have been inestimable, wrote a very able letter to *The Times* last year, combating objections of this nature against establishing any Colleges in Wales. Among those who urged such objections there were two distinguished Scotchmen, one of them being my right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair). In reply to them Lord Aberdare showed that Glamorganshire had a larger population and rental than any county in Scotland except Lanarkshire, and that probably the population of Wales and Monmouthshire in 1881 was twice as great as was that of Scotland when its earlier Universities were founded. He showed also that Monmouthshire, Carmarthenshire, Breconshire, Denbighshire, and Flintshire had large mining and manufacturing industries, that Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire had in their slate quarries a singularly intelligent body of workmen, who had shown their appreciation of the value of education by the great sacrifices they had made, and that in other counties of Wales there is a considerable urban population. As a proof that the raw material is not wanting, I may refer to the marked success of what I may call the Infant College at Cardiff, which was opened only in October last. I have received a letter from the Principal within a few days, stating that it has already 150 day students, and that there are between 600 and 700 young persons who attend the evening classes in Cardiff and adjacent towns. But there is another fact to which I should like to call the attention of the House in support of my argument, and that is that there exists already a large amount of intellectual life and activity in Wales. I believe that Englishmen generally look very kindly upon my countrymen. They regard them as a good, quiet, orderly people, but also as comparatively ignorant, illiterate, and uncultivated. A short time ago *The Times* told its myriad readers that the Welsh read nothing but the Bible and sermons. With regard to the former part of the indictment, I plead guilty on their behalf. They do read the Bible very largely, and I think a nation may do a worse thing than be familiar with that Book. But as for the other, the fact is that there are comparatively few sermons printed in Welsh, as the Welsh prefer hearing sermons to reading them. But what I want to convey to the House is this—that there is a large living literature in Wales, which proves that its people are a reading people to a remarkable extent. In 1879, the Church Congress was held at Swansea, and a clergyman, the Rev. David Williams, read a very able and exhaustive paper mainly on the periodical literature of Wales, in which he showed that Wales had 84 newspapers and periodicals (32 in Welsh and 52 in English), and that, if we exclude London, this is a larger number than is found in England in proportion to the population. As for periodicals, he said that Wales stood higher than any part of the Kingdom, London again excepted. Scotland has 41 periodicals, Ireland 29, England 148, Wales 22. Thus, in proportion to population, Wales has twice as many as England, one-and a-half time as many as Scotland, and four times as many as Ireland. But there is a large living literature not only in periodicals, but in books. There are works in the Welsh language not only on Theology and Biblical literature, of which there is great abundance, but on History, Biography, Science, Natural History, Fiction, Poetry and Music. One of the witnesses before the Departmental Committee, a large publisher at Wrexham, stated that he had made a calculation that the Welsh spent some £100,000 a-year on literature. I say this not by way of vaunting, but because I really think there is great ignorance and misconception among Englishmen as to the condition of Wales, and because, also, what I say is strictly *ad rem* in reference to this discussion, as showing that the mind of the people of Wales is alive, and that they are, therefore, prepared to appreciate higher education. It may be said that we ought to wait for the development of the intermediate system of education promised by Government; that it is more logical to begin with secondary schools rather than with Colleges. There is, no doubt, much force in this. But it is a curious fact that in Scotland and Ireland, and, I believe, to some extent also in England, Collegiate Institutions have preceded intermediate and even elementary schools. The system of parochial schools established by John Knox was posterior to the three Universities of St. Andrew's, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, which were founded respectively in 1410, 1450, and 1495. The Queen's Colleges in Ireland were founded in 1849; but the system of intermediate education only in 1879; and yet the Queen's Colleges did good service in giving to many young Irishmen an excellent education. My right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education may think me a little inconsistent, after having signed a Report recommending two Colleges, to be now asking for help for a third. I might answer my right hon. Friend in the language of the poet, that—

> "The thoughts of men are widened
> With the process of the suns."

But, Sir, the fact is that since the Report of the Departmental Committee, and very much in consequence of that Report and the kind and generous feeling shown by the Government to the recommendations of that Committee, a great stimulus has been given to the cause of education in Wales, so that we may expect a large rush to the Institutions that are provided. I join my hon. Friends in expressing gratitude to the Government for the manner in which they have taken up this matter. Certain recommendations were made in the Report of the Departmental Committee, every one of which the Government have shown their willingness to adopt. The Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education has approached the question of Welsh education in a spirit of earnestness and sincerity which has been of very great benefit to the cause, and, having helped Welshmen to establish two Colleges, I hope my right hon. Friend will add to the obligations he has already imposed upon us by lending a favourable ear to the prayer of so many thousands of the Welsh people, and not allowing the College at Aberystwith to be left without succour.

MR. D. DAVIES felt confident that the appeal now made to the Government would not be made in vain, because as Welshmen they had, in his opinion, a large claim upon the Government. Amongst other things, they had put the country to no expense for soldiers, and to very little expense for policemen. But, at the same time, he felt that they had no right to call upon the Government for more money unless they could show something for it. All they asked the Government to do was to give them something which would enable them to go on now, and if in the course of five or six years it was found they were not worthy of it, the grant now given might be withdrawn. The richer classes in Wales could afford to send their sons to the Colleges in England; but the farmers could not afford to do so. He, therefore, earnestly appealed to the Government to consider the case of Aberystwith College, and hoped they would look favourably upon it.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD joined with his hon. Friends who had spoken in thanking the Government for what they had already done. Welshmen felt grateful to the Government, especially because they felt that they were the only Government which, during the last 300 years, had done anything for the Welsh people. At the same time, they felt that what had been already promised was not all that was required. This matter had been brought before the House in 1879 by the hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian), and it was while that discussion was going on that he, at all events, and he believed many other Welsh Members, felt that there was really hope for the Welsh people; and that hope was brought about by the expressions made use of by the Prime Minister in the course of that debate. The College at Aberystwith was the outcome of a movement commenced in the year 1863, with the object of establishing Colleges and a University for Wales. He had been connected with that movement from the first, and had, therefore, every opportunity of knowing what the original programme was, and what difficulties the promoters had to contend with. Many years were spent in raising money and holding meetings to arouse public sympathy; and the Welsh people responded liberally to the appeal made to them, though many from whom better things might have been expected held aloof, or even showed hostility to the movement. At last, in the year 1872, a College was established at Aberystwith, which had proved a great success, and at which the attendance of students had increased from year to year. Whatever might be the success of the Colleges to be established at Cardiff and Bangor, the College at Aberystwith was the parent Institution, and ought to be supported. The College at Aberystwith was the only one that would supply the educational wants of the people of Mid Wales. In these circumstances, he trusted that the grant to the College would be raised from £8,000 to £12,000 a-year. It must be remembered that Wales was the most inexpensive part of the United Kingdom to govern, and that, except as a part of the highway between England and Ireland, no public money had been spent upon it. In conclusion, he ventured to appeal to the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education to assist in bringing Aberystwith College into such a state of efficiency as would render it capable of supplying the higher educational wants of the people of Mid Wales.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, there could be but one opinion, among those who heard it, as to the admirable speech of the hon. Member who had placed this Resolution on the Paper. He did not rise on behalf of the Government to respond to the appeals of hon. Members on behalf of this College, because that task would devolve upon his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education. For his own part, he yielded to no man in the House as regarded sympathy with the question which the hon. Member had so much at heart, because he himself had been one of the pioneers of the movement which had led to the foundation of Aberystwith College. As far back as 1853 he had been associated with the movement which had for its object the promotion of higher education in Wales, and very uphill work it had been to bring about the present state of things in that respect. Notwithstanding the passionate desire for higher education prevalent among the Welsh people, no part of Her Majesty's Dominions had been so miserably provided with educational endowments. Such as there were had been given by Churchmen; and it had, therefore, been almost impossible for the Nonconformists to avail themselves of them. The Aberystwith College, which had been established, in a large degree, through the exertions of Sir Hugh Owen, had been founded and had been supported for a long time by the pence of the poor, which had been obtained by a house-to-house collection, and by collections made at the doors of the churches and chapels; and the fact that 100,000 people had each subscribed 2*s.* 6*d.*, or a less sum, towards its endowment, was sufficient to establish its claim to being a people's College. He desired to call the attention of the House to the fact that of 16 scholars sent from Aberystwith to Oxford four gained the first-class and 10 obtained honours; while of 12 sent to Cambridge two obtained first-class honours and one became a Wrangler. He very much doubted whether the best of English public schools—whether Eton or Harrow, for instance—could show such a record. It was a pity that the Departmental Committee which had expressed definite opinions concerning the Cardiff and Bangor Colleges had left that of Aberystwith an open question. The physical barriers which separated one part of Wales from another made communication between them very difficult. There were really three districts in Wales—North Wales, South Wales, and Mid Wales. Two Colleges were established at the extreme North-West and South-West ends of the country; but the people of Aberystwith might just as well send their sons to Oxford or Cambridge as to Bangor or Cardiff. He entirely agreed with the Report of the Departmental Committee that if we wanted to educate the people we must take education to their doors. Welsh Members ought to feel very grateful to the Government for what they had done for Bangor and Cardiff; and he could not but remember that when a similar appeal was made to right hon. Gentlemen opposite when they were in power it was received with deaf ears. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, received their request with a stubborn *non possumus*. He hoped that the liberal spirit which had induced the Government to give £8,000 a-year to Bangor and Cardiff would now induce them to give something—not necessarily so large a sum—to Aberystwith. He had no doubt of the ability of the people of Wales to support three Colleges, and there was no reason in the world to fear that Aberystwith would do any damage to Cardiff or Bangor. Cardiff was already thoroughly established, and he was delighted to hear that it was achieving a success not surpassed by Liverpool, or Manchester, or Sheffield. There were 150 day scholars and 700 night scholars already at work. No such great results could, of course, be expected of Aberystwith; but he was sure it would justify by results the action of the Government if a substantial grant were made to it. Nothing could be more fair and moderate than the speech of his hon. Friend who introduced the subject, and he thought they would all be content to leave the question in the hands of his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, who had shown a greater interest in Welsh education than any of his Predecessors.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN said, that in 1879 he, at the request of his brother Welsh Members, had brought the matter before the House, when his Motion did not meet with the acceptance of the Government. He was deeply grateful to the Government for what they had done, and he was sure that his feelings were shared by all the Welsh people. The College at Aberystwith was in a different position from any other Welsh College. It had been established, as had already been stated, by a national movement; and it would be a great pity if it were allowed to die, as it certainly would, if it were not aided by the State. The students of the College came almost altogether from Mid Wales, and there was no danger of its interfering with Cardiff. There were young men enough for all the Colleges. Sir Hugh Owen had said that of young men between 15 and 26, who might avail themselves of College education, there were 50,000 in Wales. All Welshmen would look with deep regret at the abandonment of the College, and he thought it was fairly entitled to some measure of assistance from the Government.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the House had had a most interesting debate, and the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen who opened the discussion were all that could be desired in tone, manner, and most effective advocacy. It was impossible for anyone acquainted with Aberystwith College—supported, he might almost say, by the pence of the people—to over-estimate the good work which it had done. The objects for which the College was founded had practically been obtained. He did not say it had not work still before it; but if its doors were closed to-morrow it would have done a successful work for the cause of education. It was not that the number of its students had been great, for in any year they had not reached 100, and they had often fallen lower. Nor was the site a good one. That was admitted by all the witnesses who came before the Committee. It had been stated that it drew three-fourths of its students from Mid Wales.

But the testimony was distinct that the success of the students at Oxford and Cambridge had been most remarkable, which testified to the good work done in the College, and still more to the excellence of the raw material with which it was supplied. He had had abundant evidence of the remarkable efforts made by the Welsh people to obtain knowledge under difficulties such as hardly any other people, except Scotchmen, had to contend with. Cases had been brought under his notice of miners, quarrymen, and people in the most straitened circumstances, almost starving themselves, in order that they might go to College, and of their obtaining such sound knowledge and such distinction as to do honour to the Principality as well as to themselves. The Departmental Committee had done good service. This was the first opportunity he had had of saying anything in the House with respect to the Departmental Committee; and he should be doing injustice to them and to his own feelings if he did not say how much the House, and how much Wales, was indebted to their labours. The noble Lord opposite (Viscount Emlyn) and the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) had been most energetic. Mr. Lewis Morris had shown all the ardour and affection of a Welshman for his country, Lord Aberdare had done yeoman service, and the Committee had also the great advantage of the services of a most able man—Canon Robinson. Speaking for the Education Department, he would say that they would be very glad if either North Wales accepted Aberystwith College, or Aberystwith College had offered to transfer its endowments to Bangor or elsewhere in North Wales. He believed the people of North Wales were perfectly justified in requiring that their College should be more accessible than Aberystwith was to them. In the Memorial submitted to the Prime Minister, enough had been said of the inaccessibility of Aberystwith. He thought they were all agreed that the people of North Wales had done wisely in selecting Carnarvonshire as the site for the North Wales College. The only question was whether Wales could support three Colleges. Having himself recently gone to the Treasury and obtained two not inconsiderable grants, one for North Wales and the other for South Wales, he felt that he should be going very far if he were now to ask for a third grant. The large subscriptions raised, both in North and South Wales, for the Welsh Colleges, did great credit to the Welsh people. He had been astonished to hear of the subscriptions, amounting to thousands of pounds, raised by the Welsh quarrymen, showing the earnest desire of those men that the Colleges should be a success. He could not accept the Resolution of his hon. Friend, because it was plain that to put the three Colleges on the same footing, so far as State aid was concerned, was not quite the position which ought to be taken up. If the three Colleges could co-exist and flourish without interfering with each other, then he thought the Department would be justified in subsidizing them. He therefore proposed that an inquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain what was the actual condition of Aberystwith College. If he found that the three Colleges could co-exist without mutual disadvantage, he should then have to inquire into the financial position of Aberystwith College. He could not immediately make any further declaration, nor was it possible for anyone to do so without obtaining further information. All he could say was that a good case had been made out for inquiry, and that the Government would consider the matter in the most favourable manner.

Viscount EMLYN said, he was astonished at the right hon. Gentleman pointing to some further inquiry in connection with this matter. The House had not been told what the result of that inquiry would be.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, what he stated was that an inquiry would be made into the financial position of the College—the cost at which it was carried on.

Viscount EMLYN said, that anybody who wished to find out the financial position of the College could do so in one day. The hon. Member who introduced this subject (Mr. Rendel) said he made no complaint. He (Viscount Emlyn) did complain, and he thought the constituencies of Wales were complaining strongly of the prospect of Aberystwith College being allowed to drop and fall. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that his answer would give the hon. Member who brought this matter forward perfect satisfaction. He should be curious to know whether it had had that effect. The movement out of which Aberystwith College grew was one of a most remarkable character, because it stood a test which had wrecked many other Colleges —the test of an appeal to the pockets of those who were engaged in it. He could not accept the statement which they had heard from the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, in any shape or form, as being satisfactory. It was clearly laid down by the Committee appointed in 1880 to inquire into the whole subject that Aberystwith College was to be utilized; and the right hon. Gentleman was in error when he stated that the Report of the Committee was vague as to what was to be done with it. The Government might have taken several courses; but, at all events, it was requisite that they should have a policy. He gathered from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he had not the least idea what he should do with Aberystwith College. All he did was to promise inquiry into the financial conditions of the College, which did not seem a very satisfactory answer. The Government appeared to be drifting in an aimless way, which would be very dangerous unless they were pulled up in their course. They had, in the first instance, adopted the plan of giving grants simply because it was the easiest way of dealing with education; and now they had shelved for the time the question of intermediate education. It was true that for the last two Sessions it had been mentioned in the Queen's Speech; but nothing had ever come of it. The scheme, if there was one, should be laid on the Table of the House, as some earnest given them that that question was going to be dealt with. They had been told at the very fag end of last Session that some details were not settled, and now they had the same thing told them; in fact, the question of intermediate education was put entirely aside. He would press upon the Government that until they had drawn up a scheme for the grammar schools they would not be able to deal properly with the Colleges, which depended upon these schools. It looked now as if the grammar schools were to be gradually squeezed out of existence. The Government seemed quietly and calmly to have let Aberystwith drop out of their sight. Last year a deputation had waited on the right hon. Gentleman to ask that he would give due consideration to the claims of Aberystwith in deciding upon the claims of the different towns which were competing as to which should have the College, and the Lord President of the Committee of Council on Education had admitted their claim to consideration. The admission of Bangor did not make it necessary to lose sight of Aberystwith, which might have offered to meet them in some way. Now there was considerable difficulty in the position; it might be contended whether three Colleges could exist together and do good work. Another point to which he would like to call attention was the marked absence of any reference, on the part either of the right hon. Gentleman or any other Member who had addressed the House, to the existence of another College in Wales—namely, Lampeter. This College had existed for over half-a-century; it had good buildings, and its work was increasing. The students of Lampeter graduated not only in theology, but in classics, history, science, and modern literature. Theology there occupied a position as nearly as possible identical with that which it occupied at Cambridge. Lampeter was established for the training of young clergymen; but its doors had been opened as widely as possible to Nonconformists, and no religious tests or observances were required. The College was affiliated to Oxford and Cambridge in a way that no other College was affiliated except that at Nottingham. This College was doing good work, and he protested against its being ignored in the discussion.

MR. MUNDELLA said, all that the noble Lord had stated was correct; but Lampeter was a denominational College, and if he had mentioned that he must have mentioned others.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, there was absolutely no religious teaching given unless it was requested. The action of the Government during the last few years had rather disappointed him. He had hoped that long before this the right hon. Gentleman would have taken in hand intermediate education for Wales. He did not know whether the Bill was ready. [Mr. MUNDELLA said that it was.] He hoped that, being ready, the right hon. Gentleman would produce it, because if he waited until the Order Book was cleared, he would have to wait a long time. He felt that Aberystwith College had been hardly treated. As the pioneer of education in Wales, it was hard that it should be suddenly, dropped, and almost snubbed, by being left to die a natural death, while the other two Colleges had £4,000 a-year each.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that Aberystwith had £4,000 a-year up to the present time.

VISCOUNT EMLYN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would say he was not going to drop it? [Mr. MUNDELLA: I have said so.] But how long was the grant to be continued—for a term of years or permanently? The right hon. Gentleman had absolutely refused to give a pledge, except as to inquiry. There was nothing to prevent Aberystwith being dropped if it could not have the grant; and the stoppage of it was threatened. Uncertainty was a great drawback to education in Wales. People were hanging back, waiting to know what would be done with Aberystwith. If the right hon. Gentleman had made up his mind, he ought to have told the House so in his speech, instead of indulging in these interruptions. He hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman had adopted some policy in regard to this question he would tell the House what it was.

SIR JOHN JENKINS said, they did not ask the Government to support any denominational College. They appealed to the Government on behalf of Aberystwith, on account of the excellent work it had done, and on account of its undenominational character. The people of Wales were not fond of applying to the Government in such matters as these. They preferred subscribing among themselves, and in regard to Aberystwith they had subscribed £51,000 for its maintenance between 1863 and 1880. Aberystwith had also strong claims owing to its geographical position. This appeal was made respectfully and earnestly on behalf of the loyal people of Wales, and he hoped it would not be made in vain.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that, as several appeals had been made to him in the course of the debate, it would be hardly respectful for him to remain silent. The Motion of the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel) only appeared on the Paper that morning, and he had only learned the purport of it yesterday, when it became his duty at once to look into the question, and see what information the Treasury had on the subject up to the present time. He found, to his great surprise, that there was not a single word at the Treasury on the subject of any grant to Aberystwith College, except the intermediate grant made during the last two years out of the £8,000 a-year which was promised after the Committee of 1881 to the North and South Wales Colleges. The Papers relating to this intermediate grant were the only Papers in the Treasury from which he could obtain any information except the Report of the Committee of 1881—a very influentially constituted Committee, of which the noble Lord who sat on the opposite side of the House (Viscount Emlyn) was a Member, and which made, apparently, a unanimous Report, or, at least, a Report as to which there was no difference of opinion on the subject of this College. That Report, for which the public were greatly indebted to the Committee, covered the whole question; but on this subject of a third Welsh College he wished the House to remember that the noble Lord and the other Gentlemen who signed the Report only proposed that there should be two Colleges in Wales. They gave a tolerably satisfactory reason why there should only be two Colleges; and as to the existing College at Aberystwith, they used an expression which pointed to the propriety of that Institution being closed or being transferred to Bangor. ["No, no!"] Well, the words to which he referred were these—

> "The College at Aberystwith, whether retained on its present site or removed to Carnarvon or Bangor, must be accepted as the College for North Wales."

This being all the information he found at the Treasury when endeavouring to prepare for this debate, he had come down to-night to hear what it was the hon. Member proposed. He had listened very carefully to almost the whole of the debate, having only been absent from the House for a few minutes; he had heard the proposals made on both sides; and the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Emlyn) would, perhaps, forgive him if he said that it would not be proper for him to pass from the express question before the House, which was that of Aberystwith College only, to the other interesting points to which allusion had been made. As to the College itself, the proposal seemed to be that, inasmuch as it was recommended that grants of £4,000 a-year should be given to two Colleges, one at Cardiff and the other either at Aberystwith or at Bangor, and inasmuch as while the other Colleges were being built part of the grant had been given to Aberystwith, they ought not, now that the other Colleges were built, to cut Aberystwith adrift and leave it entirely without help. It was contended that there was good cause for supporting three Colleges instead of two. This being really the whole of the case before the House, he wished to say, on behalf of the Government and in support of what had fallen from his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council on Education (Mr. Mundella), that he would very carefully consider the proposal, which was absolutely new as far as the Government were concerned. He had heard of the Memorial presented to the Prime Minister the day before yesterday, and he had heard of the proposal of the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire through the Notice which that hon. Member had given. He had also heard the debate, and, as a result, he could promise with almost absolute certainty that—notwithstanding the fact that the Departmental Committee of 1881, which was composed of Lord Aberdare, the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Emlyn), and others, recommended that there should be two Colleges—inasmuch as they had to-night heard very strong reasons assigned why, instead of two Colleges, the Government should endow three, the matter should be looked into with impartiality, and with a view to give any consideration in their power to the claims of the Welsh people. He was bound to say that it was very satisfactory to listen, almost for the first time since he had been in Parliament, to a not absolutely, but certainly essentially, Welsh debate; and he might, perhaps, be allowed to congratulate the hon. Gentlemen who had taken part in the discussion upon the fact that there seemed to be great moderation in the tone adopted, and practical proposals had been put forward which it would not be difficult for them to deal with when they had to consider the course it was best to take. He ought not to say more at the present moment. He had, he thought, said as much as it was reasonable the Government should be asked to say on such very short notice; and he hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Rendel) would accept the assurance he had given, and that the debate would not be prolonged.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that every hon. Member who had spoken, except the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), had expressed himself in favour of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel). The words uttered by the right hon. Gentlemen he had referred to were really the death-sentence of Aberystwith College. The Vice President of the Council had said that he would grant an inquiry; but the matter had been already inquired into by the Departmental Committee, which sat for two years. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had said that he was not certain as to the financial condition of Aberystwith College. Well, in the very Memorial which the right hon. Gentleman held in his hand every statement which could possibly be made as to the financial condition of that College was made. The right hon. Gentleman, having read that Memorial, knew everything that could be possibly known on the subject. He (Mr. Stanley Leighton) hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire would not allow himself to be put off in this way by the Government, and would not allow the interests of Aberystwith to be shunted once more. Those interests had been shunted by the Departmental Committee, they had been shunted by the Government, and now, having been held for a length of time in a sort of balance, they were to be shunted again by this answer of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella). The Chancellor of the Exchequer had congratulated hon. Members on this being a Welsh debate, but there was no reason why it should be an exclusively Welsh debate, because in this question was involved the payment of a large sum of money out of the Imperial Funds; and the country and every Member of the House had a right to see that the application of that money should be settled on a principle tending to the national good, and contributing towards the attainment of an object of national importance. It was on this ground that, as an English Member, he desired to take part in this debate. But he had a still nearer and still more personal reason for intervening; because he, like his hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire, had many Welsh-speaking constituents, and he, unlike his hon. Friend, had his home in the midst of those persons, to whom the removal of this College would be an absolute denial of the means of higher education — means which they had promoted and obtained themselves, and which now, for a length of time, they had been enjoying. He did not believe, from what had passed in that House, that Members who had not an intimate knowledge of the case could be quite aware of some of the circumstances connected with the origin of this College. The circumstances connected with its origin were these. The Nonconformists of Wales were determined that their ministry should be a learned ministry; they were determined that the ministers of their chapels should have as good facilities and as great opportunities of obtaining the very best standard of knowledge and learning as were known in England. That was the origin of the College. It was the outcome of a movement of Nonconformists, not of Secularists; and, like all great movements, it was inspired by a deeply religious motive. The religious arrangements of the College, and the facilities for religious instruction, were such as were agreeable to all the Nonconformists of all the different sections—to the Wesleyans, the Calvinists, the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Unitarians. It was a fact that one-third of the scholars who had been trained at Aberystwith College had gone into the ministry of the Church or of the Chapel.

Mr. RENDEL: I think you will find that it is one-sixth. The numbers are 59 to 369.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg pardon. I am taking it from the Memorial presented to the Privy Council, and I think the hon. Member will find the figures to be 90 out of 300.

Mr. RENDEL: I must state positively that the numbers are as I gave them—namely, 59 to 369, or under one-sixth.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he was at issue with the hon. Gentleman. If the hon. Member would refer to the document he (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was quoting, he would see that he was right, or that if the number was not exactly a third it was only a trifle short of it, and it was certainly more than one-fourth. He maintained that everybody who knew anything about this College knew that what he said was true—namely, that it had had its origin in the strength of the feeling that prevailed amongst Nonconformists in favour of a learned ministry, and in the opinion that the establishment of this College was the means of obtaining it. First of all, the subscriptions came from the poor—from the congregations of the chapels—and Sir Hugh Owen had declared that 70 out of every 100 subscriptions were of sums of 2*s.* 6*d.* and under. So strong, however, was the feeling, that the rich people saw that they could not overlook the movement; and they themselves came forward with subscriptions of fifty pounds, hundreds, and even thousands of pounds. The rich and the poor were thus joined together, and, in a little time, it was found that politics created no division on this matter; but that Conservatives and Liberals were united in their support of the College. Furthermore, it was found that religious differences, which were strongly marked in the Principality, were wiped away on the question, and that Churchmen and Dissenters both extended their cordial support to the scheme, and offertories from the churches swelled the subscription list. He did not believe that another instance was to be found throughout the whole of the United Kingdom where the whole population, putting aside religious and political differences and distinctions between rich and poor, had gone together so thoroughly and entirely as the Welsh people had done in their support of Aberystwith College. It was a College founded upon such principles and upon such a national feeling that the Government, as he understood, were about to abolish. But, even more than this, it was not only from Wales itself that subscriptions came, for the Welshmen of London, Manchester, and Liverpool contributed. No less than £25,000 were received from England in support of this National College. The Departmental Committee had done but scant justice to the College in their Report. They found a growing College, a College which had been created by the self-help of the Welsh people, and a College which had been in existence for about a quarter of a century. They found that College nationally endowed, supported by special grants from Parliament, and yet now, between the Departmental Committee and the Government, that College was in danger. At this point he should like to say something as to the conduct pursued by the Government in the matter from the beginning to the end. He felt very strongly on the subject. The Government sent a number of agents on a tour of perambulation throughout Wales, shaking a bag of £8,000 in the ears of Welshmen. They went from one county to another, the Government being in search of popularity, and the unfortunate Welshmen, of course, being in search of endowment, every one of the 12 counties expecting that it would be the happy recipient of the £8,000. It must be remembered that this was national money, and the House had a right to demand that the Government would take upon itself the responsibility of saying where the endowment should be located. Well, what did they do? They put up the endowment, as it were, to auction, and said—"Whoever can bring the greatest number of votes and appears the strongest will have the money, and not those who are most in need of the money." In this way Central Wales was betrayed, and two rich places—namely, Bangor, with its slate quarries, and Cardiff, with its docks—towns which, though they were Welsh in name, were hardly Welsh in character, having lost much of their Welsh nationality through the influx of foreigners—which were able to take care of themselves, received these two grants, while the poor men of Central Wales had had taken from them even what they possessed. Now, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel) would not be satisfied with words, but would insist upon deeds. He hoped the College of Aberystwith would not find in his hon. Friend a second Lord Aberdare. That noble Lord had been the first President of this College, and the Chairman of the Departmental Committee, and the friends of the College thought he was a person whom they could trust. This was, perhaps, the reason why they did not press their claims as strongly as they might have done in the first instance. Lord Aberdare had now left them entirely in the lurch, and had become the President of, or a leading man in, the College of South Wales. He (Mr. Stanley Leighton) did not wish to urge the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire and the other Members, who, in this instance, were allied with him, to undertake a forlorn hope, or to undertake anything in which they were perfectly certain to be beaten by the strength of the Government. Therefore, he desired to make them a practical suggestion, and one which, if it should not be taken up by them, he trusted to be able himself to bring to a test in the House. His proposal was this—It was understood that the Government were prepared to hand over to the cause of higher education in Wales £8,000 a-year. He wished to point out the utter insecurity of an annual grant from Parliament. The position of Aberystwith College at that moment was an example of the danger of trusting to Parliament for continuous support. "Put not your trust in Governments or in Parliaments." It might happen that a Government might come which knew not Joseph, and whom Joseph did not know. Suppose a Government of economists sat on the Treasury Bench—a Government, say, presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and supported by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland—and suppose they accepted the prevailing idea which was growing so strong in these days that higher education should not be under the thumb of the Government, but that it should take care of itself, the very first thing they would do would be to veto the endowment of the Welsh Colleges. Perpetual annuities were not unlike hereditary pensions. Both were in danger in these days. He would ask his hon. Friends, as a compromise on this matter, to appeal to the Government to commute that £8,000 into a grant of £250,000 down. This seemed to him a very fair proposal, based on economical principle, and it was one which the Government of the present First Lord of the Treasury was most likely to look on with favour, because the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Ministry had always had an objection to saddling posterity with the debts which he himself had contracted. This, therefore, would be an easy way out of the difficulty. A bird in the hand was worth two in the bush. All Wales could unite in such a demand, and the sum should be divided between the three Colleges. They would then have North Wales and South Wales, Bangor and Cardiff, entirely with them. This was his proposal to the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire, and all the other Welsh Members, as well as all those who, like himself, were deeply interested in Welsh education. In conclusion, he wished to say that he was glad to find himself allied with his hon. Friends opposite in this matter. They were allied in this—that they all of them protested against the injustice and the impolicy of disestablishing and disendowing the Nonconformist College of Aberystwith. He could assure the House, and he hoped every Member would believe that they were not actuated by any sectarian, personal, or local motive, but that they acted on the principle, and on the sure conviction, that the policy of disestablishment and disendowment was wrong.

Mr. BRYCE said, he would not detain the House more than five minutes. As, however, the debate had consisted of a series of appeals by Welsh Members to the Government, and of answers to Welsh Members by the Government, he thought it only proper that an English Member, who had had some opportunity of knowing the state of Welsh education, should add something to the discussion. It had been his duty to make inquiries in the year 1866 into the condition of intermediate and higher education in Wales for the Royal Commission, which was then sitting, and in this way he had had opportunities of gauging the condition of education in the Principality. The impression left on his mind, and which he had no doubt would have been left upon the mind of any Englishman visiting Wales, was that the country had fared ill indeed, as compared with England, in the matter of its educational facilities. He believed the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire had already given some statistics to the House, and he (Mr. Bryce) would not repeat them, except to remark that the population of Wales was 1-18th of that of England, and that the educational endowments of Wales were only 1-45th of those of England, or less than a third. This condition of things was very much due to the neglect of Wales by her richer neighbour, for he believed that the only time when England had thought of doing anything for the Principality was when the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales, who were sent there under the Commonwealth, founded grammar schools there. There was in Wales a great want of even such educational facilities as existed in England and Scotland, and this state of things had been intensified by the fact that until very lately Wales was insufficiently provided with means of communication. Wales was a mountainous country, and had only recently been opened up by railroads, so that a country as to which it was more than usually necessary to bring education to the doors of the people was just the country to which education had been least brought. It was surprising to notice, under the circumstances of such want of educational opportunities, what a passion for education seemed to possess the people. He did not think there was any part of England or Ireland, or even of Scotland, where such a zeal for education was found to exist amongst the very poor. Whilst on his rounds in Wales, he had been very often struck by the large numbers of people, scarcely able to speak a word of English, who attended humble school-buildings which would not be accepted by the Education Department for the poorest elementary school in England, labouring away at classics or mathematics in order that they might fit themselves to become Nonconformist ministers. To his mind, no better proof could be given of the zeal of the Welsh people, of the thirst of those people for educational advancement, than the fact that Aberystwith College had been erected to so large an extent out of the subscriptions of persons of limited means. With regard to that College, he wished to make one remark in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Departmental Committee had reported that two Colleges were enough; but that one of them should be placed in South Wales, and that the other should either be retained in Aberystwith or transferred to Bangor. The Departmental Committee did not speak of the extinction of the College of Aberystwith; but said that if a College were started at Bangor, it should be Aberystwith College removed there. Though he did not argue that there was a complete case made out for three Colleges, still he admitted that this was a point deserving further inquiry. It was, however, a different thing to say that they must establish *de novo* three Colleges, from saying that they ought to extinguish an existing College, which had its buildings and its *clientèle*, as well as the attachment of the people who had established it. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bear this fact in mind, and also the fact that Wales was a country where the people were still very much under the influence of local feeling, and where it was not necessarily the case that people living in one district, who went to a certain place for education, would, if the educational establishment at that place were removed to another district, follow it. It was, he believed, a fact that Aberystwith College had hitherto obtained her students from North Wales or Mid Wales. As to the remarks of the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Emlyn), he should like to support them. The College at Lampeter, to which the noble Lord had referred, had for its Principal one of the most able men in Wales; but it must be remembered that the ecclesiastical associations of Lampeter were such that it was not to be expected that that gentleman, or his colleagues, could gain the confidence of the Nonconformists of Wales for some time to come. Besides the out-of-the-way situation of the place, its connection with the Established Church had been such that it could not do for Wales what a College otherwise as well fitted ought to do. He ventured to express a hope that the Government would very soon bring in their Intermediate Education Bill, of which so much had been said. He believed that intermediate education was the great need of Wales, and that, where good intermediate schools had been established, they would serve as feeders to the Colleges, and would justify the existence of, perhaps, even three Colleges. He hoped that full powers would be taken for the consolidation of endowments, and for their removal from places where they were of little value, and also that power would be taken to lay hold of dole charities, and apply them to more useful purposes, though always for the benefit of the poor.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, he had no wish to continue the debate, which, as it had now been going on for a considerable length of time, the House was anxious to bring to a conclusion. But he wished to say one word with regard to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council on Education, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was clear that this matter really resolved itself into a question of finance; and, in order that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might not imagine that it was a question that merely concerned those who resided in Wales, he (Lord Claud Hamilton) wished to tell the right hon. Gentleman of the strong feeling which existed amongst Welshmen in Liverpool, who had left the Principality possibly never to return to it. As the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council on Education was aware, the great majority of these gentlemen were not political supporters of himself (Lord Claud Hamilton), but were the strongest supporters of the Party sitting opposite. Well, he had received many communications on the subject under discussion. During the past two or three weeks a great many letters had been sent to him with regard to it; and, without exception, they had all pointed to the desirability of continuing the grant to Aberystwith College. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would approach this question in the fair and comprehensive spirit in which he generally dealt with these matters; and, if he did so, no doubt he would find that the College in question had been proved to be a great success as far as it had gone, and that unless it obtained a grant its continuance would be impossible; and, no doubt, under the circumstances, he would deal with the subject not in a cheese-paring or pettifogging spirit, but in the broad, liberal, and comprehensive spirit which its importance deserved.

MR. JONES-PARRY said, he was one of those who believed that though speech was silvern silence was golden, and he did not trouble the House often. But on this occasion he could not sit silent, even at that late hour, when an active debate was proceeding—a debate in which not only his countrymen on the Ministerial side of the House, but he was happy to say Gentlemen on the other side who sympathized with the Welsh people, were taking part. He would, however, only say a very few words, and they would be practical. He did not happen to be in the House to hear the favourable and courteous speech which he was told the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council on Education had made on the question a short time ago. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman very much for what he heard he had said in that speech; but he would venture to remind him, and also the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of one point which appeared to be very crucial —namely, that last year an offer was made to the Universities of Scotland of £40,000, and that offer was rejected by the Scotch Members as being utterly inadequate. Taking into consideration the relative population and taxation of Scotland and Wales, he calculated that if Scotland was entitled to £40,000 for her Universities, the Principality was entitled to £17,000 annually. And yet what did the Welsh Members ask for? They asked simply for £12,000 a-year, and they would be very glad and very grateful to the Government if they would give them that. The Government had already promised them £8,000 a-year, £4,000 for the new South Wales College at Cardiff, and £4,000 to the new North Wales College at Bangor. All they asked was that the Government should give them another £4,000 a-year for the already-established and popular College of Aberystwith in Mid Wales. Wales, he might remind hon. Members who lived before school boards were established, was known in old times as North Wales, or, in their ancient British language, Gwynedd; Mid Wales, or Powis; and South Wales, or Dehendir. They had already, through the generosity and justice of the Government, for which they were very grateful, because it was exceptional, obtained two Colleges; but in the College of Aberystwith he had always taken a great deal of interest. He, in his humble capacity, was one of the first supporters and originators of that College, and he should be very sorry indeed if it were to collapse while its two more modern rivals flourished. He would point out that Aberystwith College was specially adapted for Mid Wales. Cardiff College was at the extreme end of South Wales, while Bangor was at the extreme end of North Wales; and these Colleges, being intended for the higher education of the middle classes, must necessarily be fed by students in the immediate locality. This might be proved by the fact that the four counties of North Wales—namely, Carnarvon, Anglesea, Denbigh, and Flint had only contributed about one-sixth of the students of Aberystwith College up to this time. Again, he would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that Scotland had had a grant amounting to £150,000 towards the buildings of her educational and University Institutions. Welshmen did not ask for any aid towards their educational buildings. Aberystwith College was already established in very handsome and commodious buildings, and the two new Colleges of North and South Wales were being built from their own resources. He thanked God that his countrymen, though they were called poor, had come forward in a most generous and magnanimous manner—even to the pence of the poor—not only to establish the College at Aberystwith, but also to assist the two new Colleges. Though he did not wish to use strong or un-Parliamentary language, he might say he thought it would be almost a national crime if the College of Aberystwith, which had led the way under very disadvantageous circumstances, in educational advancement, and which had been working so satisfactorily for many years, should be allowed to collapse for want of a paltry £4,000 a-year from a great country like this. He appealed to the Government on another ground. Welshmen had been—and who would deny it?—the most loyal, quiet, and well-behaved people in the United Kingdom ever since the days of the Tudors. If hon. Members wanted a proof of this they should read through Welsh history. They had had no rebellions; they had had no revolutions; they did not deal in dynamite; they paid their rents to their landlords, and they never troubled the House of Commons in any way. They did not pretend that they had grievances. Thank God, all their grievances were wiped away in the times of the Tudors, when they were placed on a perfectly equal level with their friendly neighbours, whom they called the Saxons, and who only invaded them now for their advantage. He humbly hoped and trusted, and he believed firmly that the Government would treat them as generously—he might almost say as justly—as the Welsh people thought they deserved. Although he regarded this as a national question, quite irrespective of creed or of politics, as was shown by the Report which had been received, he would say that Members from Wales had a right to some consideration from the present Government, in whose support every county and borough in the Principality sent to that House a Member, with the exception of the constituencies represented by two hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he joined in the opinion expressed as to the moderation which had characterized the speeches delivered in the course of that debate; but even at the last moment they had not arrived at the conclusion of Her Majesty's Government in respect of this matter. The Vice President of the Council had said that he was going carefully to consider the question—that was to say, the financial position of the College at Aberystwith. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that he was rather taken at a disadvantage because he had only become acquainted with the terms of the Motion within the last 24 hours, and he also assured the House that he would give the matter his favourable consideration. He ventured to point out that, notwithstanding the short notice spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman, the subject was no new one to Her Majesty's Government, because it was one which had been mentioned in the Queen's Speech on two occasions. [Mr. Mundella: No, no! Not Aberystwith College!] No; but the question of intermediate education in Wales. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had not taken this matter into consideration. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have done so. He ventured to remind Her Majesty's Government that the College of Aberystwith moved to Cardiff or Bangor was not the same thing as the College at Aberystwith, and the Government must have known that that College was on the verge of being shut up; and he thought it would only have been fair on the part of the Government to have prepared the people of Wales interested in this matter for the closing of the College of Aberystwith, if that was what they really intended. But he had heard that the Government had not been able to make up their minds as to the course to be taken, because they were unwilling to disappoint their supporters from Wales. He hoped, however, that the result of the debate would be that the Government would determine one way or other—that they would tell the people who were connected, as teachers or otherwise, with the College at Aberystwith that the College would be closed, so that they might make their arrangements accordingly; or, if they proposed to retain it, that they would give them notice that the grant would be continued. This was no question of local prejudice, or of removing from one part of the country to another a denominational establishment struggling for existence. A great deal more than that was involved, because the persons immediately interested would have to make arrangements in accordance with their convenience; they could not be turned out at once. He was far from saying that the Government ought to allow the College at Bangor to be established under something like false pretences; but if the Vice President of the Council had made up his mind that there should only be two Colleges in Wales let him say so, in order that the people of Wales might know. The Government, by not coming to a conclusion on this subject until they were forced to do so by the exigencies of the case, had given rise to a great deal of disappointment and heart-burning. An hon. Member had referred to the College at Lampeter as being a Sectarian College. Well, no doubt it was a Church College; but, although established on Church of England principles, it was a College at which ample provision was made for those who were not members of the Church of England. He had authority for stating that one-third of the boys who were educated in the junior department at this moment were Nonconformists. It was, therefore, clear that Nonconformists were at least satisfied that justice was done to them when they went within its walls. Hon. Gentlemen were probably aware that the scheme of affiliating Colleges to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was one which had created great interest in the country; and he would take that opportunity of saying that Lampeter College was, he believed, the first of those which had availed itself of the scheme, so that he was justified in saying that Lampeter College occupied a distinguished position amongst the Colleges of the country. In making the appeal to Her Majesty's Government for a decision about Welsh education, he wished it to be borne in mind that he was not suing *in formâ pauperis;* he simply asked them to come to a conclusion on this truly important question without loss of time.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, this was a matter of great interest to a large number of his constituents in Lancashire, a view which would, he believed, be confirmed by his hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley). It was not a question of establishing a new College, but of destroying an old one, and the Government ought to consider seriously before they took that step. He thought it right to state that the existence of Aberystwith College was a subject of the greatest concern, not only to Welshmen in the Principality, but elsewhere; and he could bear personal testimony to the immense disappointment that would be caused by its disestablishment.

Mr. S. SMITH said, he had been struck with the extraordinary interest shown by the Welsh people with regard to Aberystwith College, who, he felt sure, would be deeply disappointed if the action of Her Majesty's Government led to its surrender. He believed, however, that the declarations of Her Majesty's Government would give great satisfaction to the Welsh people generally; and, on behalf of a large number of constituents, he tendered his thanks for the manner in which they had responded to the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. COURTNEY said, with reference to the Supplementary Votes in Committee of Supply, it was admitted that they must either be taken at that Sitting or finished to-morrow (Saturday). He thought his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proved to hon. Members who were present last night that it was absolutely necessary to take the Votes without delay. The question, then, was whether the House should, in the event of any other hon. Members wishing to speak, continue the present discussion, or proceed to the consideration of one or two limited Votes. He submitted whether it would not be better to allow Mr. Speaker to leave the Chair, so that the Vote for the Afghan contribution and two Votes on account of the Post Office might be taken.

Mr. BIGGAR asked if, in the event of the House going into Committee of Supply for the purpose of considering the Votes indicated by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the Postmaster General would be in his place?

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—AFGHAN WAR (GRANT IN AID)—SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1883-4.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £500,000, Afghan War (Grant in Aid).

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I think it is right I should give to the Committee some explanation with respect to this Vote. The contribution towards the expenses of the Afghan War is, altogether, £5,000,000 sterling; £2,000,000 of that consists in the remission of the repayment of £2,000,000, lent without interest, by the late Government, I think, in 1879, and the other £3,000,000 was to be paid in six annual instalments of £500,000 each. Now, Sir, the proposal in this Vote is that the instalment which would naturally be paid after the end of this financial year—which might be paid in the first week of April—should be paid in the last month of the present financial year. It is, therefore, not a postponement, but an anticipation of the charge. I will state to the Committee why we make this proposal. The next financial year—1884-5—will be a very remarkable one in respect to the Revenue. There will be no windfall of any kind during that year; but, on the other hand, the year 1884-5 will be, with respect to the Revenue, worse than the present year or the year following. In the present year we have the advantage of the remnant of 1½*d*. Income Tax; and we also have the advantage of the remnant of the Railway Duty, the repeal of half of which only took effect from the 1st of last October. Those remnants will probably amount to £800,000 or £900,000; but, of course, we cannot tell exactly until the accounts are made up Therefore, this year is better than next year by about that amount. The year after next will be better than next year, because the £800,000, the additional sum charged annually upon the Consolidated Fund for the debt on account of the Russian scare and the South African War, comes to an end, so that in the following year the Revenue will be £800,000 better. Under these circumstances, we have thought it wise to propose to Parliament to charge this fifth instalment rather upon the present year than upon the next year. Whether we should charge next year with half the remaining instalment or not is a matter which it is not necessary I should consider until we finally frame the Budget; but we propose to make this charge, at any rate, during the present year. There is nothing in the arrangements made in 1880 to interfere with this course; but, on the contrary, in the course of the debates in 1881 and 1882 as to the contributions towards the expenses incurred by India in regard to the Afghan War, there was more than one suggestion made that some course of this kind might be adopted, and that the repayment might be made a little more rapidly than by an equal sum each year if the Revenue admitted of it. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) made the proposal in a very practical form. I find that the noble Lord said, on the 14th August, 1882—

> "The method adopted was to give to India a sum of £5,000,000, by remitting India a loan of £2,000,000 due from India to England, and to pay the remainder—the sum of £3,000,000—in six equal amounts spread over six financial years. . . . . He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lyon Playfair) was aware that it had been necessary to raise an additional sum by taxation in the United Kingdom every year in order to pay the contribution of £500,000 to India. He would suggest that the realized surplus, if any, at the end of the financial year should not be voted for the reduction of the Debt, but for the payment to India of the amount which was due under that head, until the whole was liquidated."—(3 *Hansard*, [273] 1749-50.)

I am in a position to inform the Committee that, in every probability, there will be a sufficient surplus on the present year, which is now within a fortnight of its close, out of which to pay this additional sum of £500,000. As I have shown to the Committee that it will be for the convenience of Parliament and the taxpayer that this charge should be borne this year, the surplus in which will be sufficient to meet it, I trust hon. Members will agree to the Vote.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: The right hon. Gentleman kept for the close the important part of his statement—namely, that we may take it there is a surplus upon the financial transactions of the year which enables him to make this payment of £500,000 this year instead of next. That really being so, I do not know that anyone has anything to say, except that they are sorry so much should have been withheld from the reduction of the National Debt.

Vote *agreed to.*

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4).

(2.) £102,000, Post Office.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would take that opportunity of putting a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) with regard to the conveyance of mails. He was desirous of putting a similar question during the last two Sessions; but the Post Office Estimates were hurried through in such a way that there was no opportunity for any hon. Member to address himself to the questions of the Department. Now, the question which he wished to put to the right hon. Gentleman was one which, if the right hon. Gentleman did not feel able to answer at this moment, he would gladly postpone to some future period. He wanted to know why we, in this country, could not have the same advantages at railway stations with regard to the posting of letters which the people of foreign countries had? The right hon. Gentleman might, perhaps, be aware that at almost every foreign railway station there was a removable post office box, which remained open until within a very few moments of the arrival of the train; the letters were then collected and put at once in the van. Well, now, in England, which was supposed to be some time in advance of other countries, such postal facilities were not afforded. In many of our stations there were no pillar or letter boxes at all, and his experience was that even where such pillar or letter boxes were found, the letters, instead of being put at once into the post office, were some considerable time before taken into the town and sorted at the post office. This seemed to him to be a great inconvenience, and he could see no reason why the public of this country should not be put upon the same footing as the people of foreign countries with regard to the postal arrangements at railway stations. Many years ago, when the noble Lord the present Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) was at the head of the Post Office Department, he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) took a great deal of trouble to bring this matter under his consideration, and the noble Marquess did give certain advantages to the public—for instance, the public were allowed to post letters in the post office van, but only where there was a van in charge of a clerk. Now, in the post office train which served Whitehaven, the borough which he had the honour to represent in Parliament, there was no post office van properly so-called. The mails were conveyed by the London and North-Western Railway Company to Carnforth or Carlisle under the charge of a railway guard, and not under the charge of a post office clerk. Therefore the people in the district comprising Whitehaven, with its 20,000 inhabitants, had no power of posting letters at the last moment. They must go to the post office in the first instance; and, therefore, the people were debarred the advantage which persons residing in a place from which a post office van in charge of a post office clerk departed, enjoyed. He did not mean to move a reduction of the Vote. His desire was as perfectly as he could to bring the matter under the right hon. Gentleman's notice, in the hope that at some future time the facilities he suggested might be afforded the public.

Mr. SEXTON wished very briefly to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett) to one or two important matters concerning the despatch of mails from the West of Ireland, which had come under his notice. He had received a letter from one of his constituents at Sligo, in which it was shown that if a person posted a letter at Glasgow for Sligo and then afterwards left by train, he would land in Sligo 12 hours before the letter. Letters from England and Liverpool only occupied 22 hours in transmission, and those from Glasgow 36 hours. As to the despatch of the day mail to and from Sligo, it was as well the right hon. Gentleman should be put in possession of the facts. The day mail left Dublin at 9 o'clock and arrived at Sligo at 2.40; the distance was 140 miles; so that the train only travelled at the rate of 24 miles an hour. This train might easily be made to start at half-past 8, and to reach Sligo at 12 o'clock. The letters arriving at 2.40 were not delivered in the majority of cases until 5 o'clock. Under the proposed arrangement the letters could easily be delivered at 2 o'clock, thus rendering a reply the same night possible. Pretty much the same state of things prevailed in respect to the day mail from Sligo to Dublin. The secret of the matter was to be found in the payment which was made by the Post Office to the Railway Company. There were four great mail roads in Ireland, and the Government paid the Great Northern for the conveyance of mails £73 per mile, while to the Midland they only paid £41 per mile. The Chairman of the Midland Company, at the last half-yearly meeting of the shareholders, exposed the facts. He pointed out that the Western lines starved in comparison to the Northern, Southern, and Eastern lines, because the sum paid to the Midland was only about two-thirds of the amount paid to the other lines. And the Chairman added that his Company was quite ready at a moment's notice to run trains at 40 miles instead of 24 miles, if they were paid properly. He (Mr. Sexton) would not delay the Committee further. He trusted, however, it would be possible for the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General to procure for the citizens of Sligo, and the West of Ireland generally, the same postal facilities which were afforded in every other part of Ireland.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN asked whether it would not be feasible, now that there was a Parcel Post in operation, to make such arrangements as would permit of the distribution of Parliamentary Papers to Members of Parliament living outside the very restricted area within which they were delivered at present? Now, the restriction of the free delivery of Parliamentary Books and Papers to the present narrow district had simply this result—that the Books and Papers were almost altogether useless. All Members of Parliament did not live in London; all Members of Parliament did not live within the narrow area in which the distribution now took place. It was not every Member of Parliament who was able to be in attendance at Westminster during the whole period of the Session, so that many Books and Papers which were interesting and valuable, and which would be carefully studied if hon. Members had an opportunity of studying them, became absolute waste. As there was now a Parcel Post in operation, he did not think it would be a very serious drain upon the exertions of the Post Office Department to send the Blue Books and other Parliamentary Papers —of course, he did not mean Papers intended for immediate use—to whatever address in the United Kingdom hon. Members might choose to give. He had spoken to several Members upon the subject, and they agreed with him that the course he suggested would be a very wise and proper one to follow. Many of the Books and Papers were very costly; they were meant for the enlightenment and instruction of Members of Parliament; and, therefore, why should three-fourths of them be absolutely wasted owing to the arrangements now in force for their distribution? He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General would give his attention to the matter.

MR. WARTON said, there was a little matter he wished to revert to. He brought it under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General in 1881 and in 1882. He could not bring it forward in 1883 on account of the disgraceful way in which this and other Estimates were hurried through the Committee. He hoped that this Session they were not going to give their undivided attention to Reform Bills and nonsense of that sort, but give some real attention to the financial transactions of the different Departments of the State. After this introduction it was just possible that the point he wished to raise might be considered a rather trivial one. Perhaps it was on account of the smallness of the matter that it had escaped the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. They were all aware that the Post Office authorities preferred to have letters registered if they contained anything of value. There was one little obstacle to registration still left, and that was the charge for the envelope. He had been more than once told there was a farthing to pay. Now, he did not carry farthings, and he had had to pay a halfpenny for an envelope. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman that it would be far better to have the 2*d.* charged for registration cover the cost of the envelope. The envelope was not worth a farthing, and even if it were the Post Office could well afford to forego it. A round sum was always preferable to a broken sum, and in point of revenue he did not think the Post Office would be the loser by the change. This was the matter he wished to raise. Twice the right hon. Gentleman had kindly said he would attend to it; and he (Mr. Warton) hoped that upon the third time of asking the right hon. Gentleman would think it desirable to effect the proposed improvement.

MR. O'BRIEN wished to call the attention of the Postmaster General to the matter which was raised in a Question he put to the right hon. Gentleman the other day. He asked why it was that Mr. Thomas Walsh, who was Postmaster at Castletownshend, and who had been convicted under the Crimes Act and sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and whose sentence was confirmed on appeal, was reinstated in the position of Postmaster upon his release? He also asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not a fact that postal *employés* who had been arrested under the Peace Preservation Act merely as suspects, without ever having been convicted at all, had been dismissed from their employment. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, said he was not aware of any such cases to which he (Mr. O'Brien) had referred. He (Mr. O'Brien) had since only been able to come across one case; it was that of E. J. Barrett, a telegraphist in County Galway. Barrett was arrested under the Coercion Act upon some general suspicion. He was imprisoned in Galway Prison for five months. He was then released, and application was made for his re-instatement in the Telegraph Service, but without avail. The unfortunate young fellow had thus lost the means of obtaining a livelihood. Not only had he lost his employment, but he had ever since been persecuted by the police—in fact, he was practically ruined. He (Mr. O'Brien) was sure the right hon. Gentleman was a little more anxious than most of his class to steer an even course; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, if a man convicted of the serious offence of threatening letter-writing was to be reinstated in his former position, a man against whom no serious charge was ever made—certainly never substantiated—would experience equal indulgence from the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. HEALY said, his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had stated the facts with more moderation than the hardship of Barrett's case justified. Barrett was the sole support of aged parents, and simply because he was merely suspected of crime he had been peremptorily dismissed the Postal Service. Walsh, however, happened to be a man of Orange sympathies. He was convicted by the Resident Magistrate, and his sentence was confirmed on appeal by Mr. Ferguson, County Judge at Cork. In response to an appeal *ad misericordia*, Mr. Walsh was released from gaol, and the Postmaster General now told the Committee that the release was tantamount to an admission by the Government that Mr. Walsh was not guilty at all. Of course, it was rather hard to blame the Postmaster General himself; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman was so much in the hands of his officials. Up to the present the right hon. Gentleman had certainly given the impression that he acted upon his own responsibility. Though his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow had only mentioned the case of Barrett, it was not the only case of hardship which happened under the Coercion Act. He did not think the release of Walsh was tantamount to an admission of his innocence. They might be told that the release of Mr. Hastings was an admission of his innocence, Mr. Hastings having pleaded guilty at the trial. It was clear the Postmaster General must not accept the release of men by Government favour in Ireland as tantamount to an admission of innocence. The Government convicted Walsh, through the Resident Magistrate, of sending a threatening letter. Not only was the man convicted, but his sentence was confirmed on appeal by the County Court Judge. A case, however, was got up in the man's favour, and the Lords Justices released him from prison. It was a very extraordinary thing, however, that the Postmaster General should fall in with this friendly arrangement, because how did he suppose that the people of that locality could have any confidence in the administration of justice? Barrett was only arrested on suspicion. Was his release tantamount to an admission of his innocence? He was released from gaol just as Mr. Walsh was. Why was he not reinstated in the position he had formerly occupied? He (Mr. Healy) did not think that even the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman could find an answer. Were they to have in future the Postal Department in Ireland conducted upon Orange principles; were they to add the Department of the right hon. Gentleman to the other Departments that were conducted solely to please the Orange faction? The people were asked to place confidence in the Departments of the State; but how could they do so under present circumstances? Why was a different measure of justice meted out to Mr. Walsh than to Mr. Barrett?

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he had only one word to say with reference to the issue of postal orders. They all knew that postal orders were very convenient forms of sending money; but the difficulty about them was that they did not easily adapt themselves to sending odd sums. What he had to ask was, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider if it was not possible, by some means of affixing stamps, to make up any difference required?

Mr. FAWCETT: We are going to move in the direction the hon. Gentleman suggests.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, a few days ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General gave a reply which he (Mr. Biggar) did not exactly follow to a Question with regard to the postal arrangements on Tory Island. Tory Island stood some distance from the mainland, and there had been some difficulty in getting the mails conveyed to and fro. Some time ago, he asked a Question with regard to the class of people who carried letters in Ireland. In some instances he had heard that the remuneration was exceedingly small. He understood that the rate of pay depended upon the rate of wages in the locality; and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General promised that, if he (Mr. Biggar) would draw attention to particular cases, he would investigate them. Now, he (Mr. Biggar) did not wish to make himself the champion of individual persons, possibly persons of no merit, and who did not deserve to be supported. Besides, it was a very indiscreet reply on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, for the very reason that it led a number of people in Ireland to suppose that he (Mr. Biggar) was able to use influence with the right hon. Gentleman. He considered it was very desirable that the Post Office officials in Ireland should receive reasonable remuneration. The postal arrangements in County Cavan were of a most unsatisfactory nature. There was no intercommunication between the different parts of the country for postal purposes. If a letter had to be sent from one part of Cavan to another it was usually sent up to Dublin, and then sent to its destination, which probably was only a few miles from the place where it was posted. He should imagine it was possible to make arrangements whereby a letter posted at one place could be delivered at a place 20 miles distant under two days. Such was the state of things in Cavan. He had no doubt the same state of things prevailed in other parts of Ireland; and, therefore, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett) would apply some remedy.

MR. FAWCETT: With regard to the question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), I shall be very glad indeed to consider his suggestions. Of course, my opinion on such points is not worth anything at all compared with that of the practical officers who for years have had under their special consideration arrangements connected with the carrying of mails; but it strikes me that one of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals is surrounded by some difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman proposes that at a station like Rugby, for instance, there should be a removable letter-box on the platform, and that such letter-box should be kept open until the last moment and then put in the train. He does not seem to make any provision for sorting, so that it is just possible you will have North letters going South and South letters going North. I should like to know how the right hon. Gentleman would get over such a difficulty as I have foreshadowed; but still I will very carefully consider the matter. In order that I may not make any mistake in laying the subject before the practical officers of the Department, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would write me a short letter describing his plan. With regard to what was said by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), I shall be much obliged if the hon. Gentleman will send a copy of the letter he has received as to the delay in the conveyance of mails between Glasgow and Sligo. As to the general question of the acceleration of mails between Sligo and Dublin, I have only to say that the acceleration of the Irish mails is now the most pressing question engaging the attention of the Department. We are now on the point of settling a new time table between London and Kingstown; when that is settled we shall be in a position to effect an acceleration in regard to the Irish Provincial towns. I may remark here that I fully recognize that the acceleration of the Irish mails to the Provincial towns in Ireland is far more important than it is to Dublin, because Dublin now gets its letters at convenient times, and letters leave the City at convenient times. But I am aware that in the case of many Provincial towns there is not sufficient time given to answer a letter the same day it is received. One of the chief obstacles would be removed if the Railway Companies are willing to accept a reasonable increase of payment for an accelerated service. Therefore, nothing will promote acceleration of mails so much as that hon. Gentlemen from Ireland should do what they can to bring their opinions to bear on the Railway Companies, and cause them to be reasonable in the terms they demand from the Government. With regard to the case of Mr. Barrett, brought under my notice by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), and the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), I have to say I have an indistinct recollection of the case. I searched the records at the Office diligently yesterday, but I could not find a single instance of a man being dismissed under the circumstances alleged. I may have overlooked it; but I assure the hon. Gentlemen that I will look into this case carefully on Monday, and I will communicate to them either in the House or by letter what the result of my inquiry is. The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) has referred to three questions. One question was the conveyance of mails to Tory Island. Yesterday the hon. Gentleman asked me whether I refused to make a contract for conveyance of mails to Tory Island on certain terms. What I said in reply—and I am willing to repeat it—was that if the hon. Gentleman knows any suitable person who will convey the mails upon the terms mentioned in his question I shall be at once glad to enter into the contract. The hon. Gentleman also complained of the general postal arrangements in Cavan. The remarks I made in respect to Sligo also apply to Cavan. As to the question of the pay of letter carriers, I have only again to say that if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Biggar) knows of any particular cases that might have been overlooked by the Department, I shall be much obliged to him if he will bring them under my notice. The suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) is really one he should address to the Treasury rather than to me; because in anything involving expenditure, however small, the Treasury is supreme over the Post Office. But I will take the suggestion into consideration. I am sorry I forgot to do so before. And with regard to what was said by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) with reference to postal orders, I am glad to tell him that on the 2nd of June a new scheme, such as that which he indicated, will come into operation. I believe the effect of that scheme will be to greatly extend the use of postal orders. We shall introduce new denominations of postal orders, which I need not describe now; but the result will be that any broken sum up to £1 may be sent by using postal orders, and putting not more than five stamps on the back of the orders. The use of postal orders has enormously increased. The year they were introduced we estimated that we should issue about 50,000 a-week. That estimate has already been exceeded by more than 500 per cent, and the number now issued is 270,000 a-week, or more than 12,000,000 a-year. I believe that when the new scheme comes into operation this means of sending small sums of money will be still more largely used by the public than it has been up to the present. The question raised by the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) is one over which I have no control whatever. The distribution of Parliamentary Papers is undertaken by the Vote Office under the superintendence of the Speaker, and I have no power to alter or enlarge the area within which the Parliamentary Papers are delivered.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the hon. Member for Westmeath had only to notify to the Vote Office that he wanted certain Papers and Books kept for him and he would find his wishes complied with.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take the matter into further consideration, because it was extremely desirable that the Parliamentary Books and Papers should be delivered to Members when in the country as well as when in town.

Mr. HEALY said the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was very skilful; but that was only one branch of the question, and he had adroitly avoided dealing with the case of Mr. Walsh. They must pin the right hon. Gentleman to the case of Mr. Walsh. It was no answer to them to say what Mr. Barrett had done; that was not the question. The question was why Mr. Walsh had been treated in this way; and they wanted to know from the Postmaster General whether he was satisfied with the conduct of matters in his Department? They had had enough of the Chief Secretary's dealings with Orange magistrates; but if the Government were to import Orangemen into the Post Office there was no knowing where things would stop.

Mr. FAWCETT said, it was extremely novel to hear that he had strong Orange sympathies. So far as he understood this case, it seemed to him to stand in exactly the same position as that of several persons who had been released after having been imprisoned under the Peace Preservation Act, and who had been re-appointed to their posts. He would, however, look into the matter again.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he and his hon. Friends, of course, acquitted the Postmaster General of any personal knowledge of matters of this kind; but, unquestionably, the feeling in the neighbourhood was that this man's reinstatement was due directly to Orange sympathies. He could not for a moment understand how so clear-minded a Gentleman as the Postmaster General could be deceived by this case of a person arrested under the Peace Preservation Act. This was the case of a person convicted by the tribunal established by that Act—convicted by two Resident Magistrates; who appealed to the County Court Judge, who, on a review of the evidence, deliberately confirmed the judgment of the Court below. Afterwards, of course, the magistrates, for reasons of their own, got this man released. The whole thing had been managed *in camera,* and this man got his release just as a man sentenced to penal servitude got his release after a certain length of time.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, there was to be a new post office at Mullingar; but there had been great delay in the matter, much to the surprise of the people in that neighbourhood. There had been a rumour that a change of site had been decided on, and he would like to know whether progress was being made in that matter?

MR. FAWCETT said, his memory was not quite clear, but he would inquire.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £18,000, Post Office Packet Service.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked why this sum of £18,000 was not proposed in July last, or in August, when the Supplementary Estimates were before the House; and why the whole of these subsidies and contracts for the Post Office were not placed, as they used to be, under one head? Under this Supplementary Estimate there were, for example, under Class V., 10 subsidies to the Castle Mail Packet Company; and, again, in Vote 3, for the suppression of the Slave Trade, there was a sum of £4,800 to the Aden and Zanzibar Packet Service. That seemed to be a very inconvenient and a new practice. He would like to have some explanation.

MR. FAWCETT said, this Vote of £18,000 was exceptional. Last year the Government proposed to enter into a certain contract which would save something like £16,000, if accepted, for the conveyance of the Irish Mails by the London and North-Western Railway to Kingstown. It was not necessary to go through a long controversy; but the House rejected that proposal, and the Government reverted to the proposal of the Dublin Steam Packet Company. When the Estimates were made out last year they were made up on the supposition that the new service would be accepted by the House, and would agree to saving £16,000. Therefore, this was not an additional charge, but was a charge rendered necessary, because certain expected savings did not take place.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that his question had no reference to that matter. It was, why this Supplementary Estimate had not been proposed at the end of last Session?

MR. FAWCETT replied, that when the Supplementary Estimates were made up the Government had not got the sanction of Parliament to the new arrangement. It was almost the very last thing done in the Session.

MR. COURTNEY said, that the Aden and Zanzibar subsidy ought not to come into the Postal Contracts. That service was maintained for putting down the Slave Trade. It was represented to the Government by our Consul at Zanzibar that there was nothing more effective for stopping the Slave Trade than repeated visits of the mail steamers; and he, on that account, urged the payment of this subsidy.

MR. BIGGAR asked whether any change had been made in the amount of payment for the conveyance of the Scotch mails between Glasgow and Ardrossan? He also wished to have the opinion of the Postmaster General on the expediency of making a contract for conveying mails between Larne and Stranraer. To make a contract for that route would be an absurdity; for the only part of Ireland that would get any benefit by that route was the county of Antrim. Letters posted in any part of Scotland as far East as Edinburgh late in the evening were delivered in Belfast the following morning. With regard to the mails from England by way of Holyhead and Kingstown, in all the Irish counties except Antrim letters were delivered sooner by the present route than they could possibly be by the Larne and Stranraer route. It was possible that a little time might be saved to Belfast; but he did not believe that that would be the case under the proposed arrangements. He urged the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General not to be led away by restless people to make changes where no changes were required.

Mr. FAWCETT said, that no decision had been come to with regard to the Larne and Stranraer project, and he could assure the hon. Member that his remarks would be considered. With regard to the mails between Glasgow and Ireland, the Post Office took the cheapest routes they could get.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he was not disposed to raise any objections; but what was the sum asked? In former times it was only a nominal sum.

Mr. FAWCETT said, that in former times the mails were conveyed on nominal terms; but the owners of the steamers made certain stipulations, one of which was that if mails were sent by any other route they should make a charge.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [13th March] *reported.*

First Resolution.

Mr. HEALY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to take steps that would insure an impartial distribution of advertisements emanating from the Board of Works in Ireland, so as to include newspapers of National politics. He wished also to draw attention to the fact that the Board of Works had obtained possession of a number of monuments in Ireland, amongst others an old castle in the town of Clankilly, on which it had been the custom for 200 years to run up a flag. As soon as they took possession of this old structure they announced that the practice to which he had referred would be put a stop to, notwithstanding that the mason of the Board of Works had so far recognized the right of the people as to fix some iron holdfasts into the wall to carry the flagstaff. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would, in order to gratify the people of the district, take such steps as would prevent the custom being interfered with.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the device on the flag was of a very innocent character. On one side of the flag there was a serpent, and on the other a harp.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he had not seen the newspapers referred to by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy); but he would make inquiries into the matter, and also into the action of the Board of Works in Ireland with reference to the custom of running up a flag on St. Patrick's Day at the old castle mentioned. He had not had an opportunity yet of examining the Report of the Surveyor.

Mr. DEASY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to reconsider his decision of last night with reference to the harbour at Kinsale. He (Mr. Deasy) maintained that the quay at present projected was absolutely of no value. One of the Commissioners had stated that it would cost, at least, £100,000 to make it of any use. He asked the hon. Gentleman to suspend the operations at Kinsale until the Report of those gentlemen who were making inquiries was sent in.

Mr. COURTNEY was unable to say any more than that he would look into the matter.

Resolution *agreed to.*

The next Four Resolutions *agreed to.*

Sixth Resolution.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he wished to call attention to the serious objection there was to the charge of £100 only appearing under this Vote as a contribution towards the construction of a railway for the convenience of the Government Establishment at Dartmoor, whereas there was a further sum of £2,400 included elsewhere. It was not according to the usual practice to appropriate savings on a Vote to an entirely new service. With regard to the contribution of £2,500, nothing appeared to him more liable to abuse than an arrangement of this kind between a Company and the Government. He said that, on principle, a contribution to a railway was an objectionable thing, and that it ought to be made the subject of a special Estimate. He was at a loss to understand why £100 was taken, whereas £2,500 was really required, and why the amount came forward in the Supplementary Estimates. The Vote appeared to him objectionable on all grounds; and he was unwilling to allow it to pass without drawing to it the attention of the House.

MR. COURTNEY said, a brief history of the Vote might be interesting to the House. The railway in question was one that would greatly facilitate the supplies to Dartmoor Prison; and when it was projected an application was made to allow some of the convicts at the prison to assist in its construction. The calculations which were submitted to the Treasury from the Home Office showed that the saving effected by the railway would be very much greater than the full estimated cost of the labour of supplying the prison. Subsequently, it was found inconvenient to employ convict labour; and it was decided that, instead of keeping so many convicts at work upon the railway, there should be a grant of a certain sum of money rather less than the estimated cost of convict labour, the money to be paid when the railway was completed, and it was upon that ground that the amount came forward in the Supplementary Estimates. If it had been known when the Estimates were being prepared that the railway would be completed in the year, it would have been their duty to put this amount in the Estimates; but the Government had no such knowledge. The right hon. Gentleman complained that the Government were submitting a Vote of £100, when, in fact, they were asking the House to sanction a Vote for £2,500. That objection would lie, no doubt, if on the face of the Vote the Government had not given full information to the House that the Vote itself involved the sanction of an expenditure of £2,500. There was not the least attempt to withdraw from the House full knowledge of the expenditure to which it would be committed by voting this sum of £100. Either the Government must have presented a Vote to the House giving an exaggerated estimate of the expenditure under this particular head, or they must have presented a Vote which represented the true increase of expenditure. They had taken the utmost pains to prevent any misconception by giving the fullest particulars to the House; and had they adopted the course of proposing an Estimate of £2,500, the result would have been that under the general head the expenditure for the year would have been £413,600, whereas, as a matter of fact, it was only £411,200. In that way they would have presented to the House a totally unreal Estimate, instead of an accurate account of the expenditure incurred. It was quite true that the Government only asked for a limited sum, and that it involved the sanction of the House to a much larger sum. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, deserved the thanks of the House for calling attention to this matter. It was within the well-understood practice of the Treasury, if there were a surplus under one sub-head of the Vote, to transfer it to another sub-head of the same Vote; and it was also in the power of the Treasury to set up a new sub-head if it was covered by the Resolution which sanctioned the whole of the Vote.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he begged to thank the hon. Gentleman for his explanation; but he could not agree with his view that the setting up of a new sub-head on a Supplementary Estimate was within the well-known practice of the Treasury. To him it appeared something quite new, and he regarded the Supplementary Vote as illusory, because it would appear that a small sum only was asked for, whereas a much larger expenditure was sanctioned by the passing of the Vote.

MR. TOMLINSON said, this was a very peculiar case. Supposing it had not been necessary to take this £100, they would never have heard anything about the £2,500. They had had a very elaborate explanation, but it did not alter the peculiar aspect of the case.

Resolution *agreed to.*

The next Two Resolutions *agreed to.*

Twelfth Resolution.

MR. SEXTON begged to move that the Report of this Vote be postponed until to-morrow. It had been arranged that on this Vote he should call attention to the case of Mr. Eyre Preston, and that the Chief Secretary should deliver the reply of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was not in his place; and though he (Mr. Sexton) did not blame him, it was obvious that under such circumstances the discussion could not be taken.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Resolution be postponed,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be considered upon *Monday* next.

MOTION.

—o—

LAND DRAINAGE PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders under "The Land Drainage Act, 1861," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 137.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 15th March, 1884.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4)—CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN).

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Before the Order of the Day is read, I should like to know from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, If the Government have received any further intelligence from Egypt; and I will also ask, if he can explain how it is that at 12 o'clock there were no Members of the Government in the House?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, in reply to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I may say that Her Majesty's Government have received no information from General Graham since the telegram received last night, which appears in the newspapers this morning. I think also that no further information—or, at any rate, no recent information—has been received from Khartoum. It appears that the telegraph service has been interrupted for two or three days between Khartoum and Shendy. A steamer arrived either yesterday or the day before at Shendy from Khartoum, which had been fired at on the way and it is, therefore, assumed that some of the tribes in that part of the country have risen.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Can the noble Marquess say what is the date of the latest communication received by the Government from General Gordon?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I think the last communication was received on Thursday.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Has any information been received from Assouan? I want to know what is going on there.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No; there is no intelligence whatever from Assouan, and nothing that I am aware of is taking place in that part of the country. In reference to the other Question put to me a short time ago by the right hon. Gentleman, as to the presence of Members of the Government when the House met, I may say that the House was formed not very long after 12 o'clock, and there were a considerable number of Members of the Government present at the time.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Can the noble Marquess give the House any authentic list of the numbers of officers and men killed and wounded in the recent engagement?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The telegram published this morning from General Graham contains, I believe, an accurate account of the officers killed and wounded in the recent engagement. I am not certain yet whether the list of men has arrived. If it has arrived, it has not been published, because the numbers have not yet been identified. Every information of that sort will be published in the newspapers as soon as possible.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Has the British regiment sent up the Nile gone to Assouan or Assiout?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I believe the British battalion sent up the Nile has gone to Assiout.

MR. RAIKES asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, If it was not the fact that there was not a single Member of the Government in the House when he (Sir Thomas Brassey) entered at 20 minutes past 12?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he believed there were several in other parts of the House.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EGYPT (EASTERN SOUDAN)—MILITARY OPERATIONS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, in rising, according to Notice, to call attention to the enforced abandonment of Khartoum, and of the Eastern Soudan; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it will be highly discreditable to this Country if Her Majesty's Ministers, who are responsible for Egypt, abandon these territories to slavery and barbarism, and that the only satisfactory settlement of the disorders in the Soudan will be the appointment of a British Governor General to restore order and to develop civilization in those Countries, in friendly co-operation with the Sovereign Power,"

said, that he had had this Resolution upon the Paper for two successive Friday nights, and it was only for the convenience of the Government that he had not brought it forward. In view of the present condition of affairs in Egypt, the question was, if possible, of more gravity than it had ever assumed before. The importance of the news from Khartoum could hardly be exaggerated. The House had been made aware, from the statement just made by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, that the communications between the Government centre of the Soudan and Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt had been cut off for some days; and he, therefore, desired to call attention to a remarkable statement, almost prophetic in its character, which came from General Gordon upon this subject a few days ago, and in regard to which he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had endeavoured in vain to obtain a declaration from the noble Marquess. On the 6th of this month, General Gordon told the Correspondent of *The Times*, who was also Agent General of Her Majesty at Khartoum, that—

> "The emissaries of the Mahdi would succeed in raising the tribes between Khartoum and Berber. That was not owing to discontent, but to fear, caused by the announcement of the policy of the Government in regard to the abandonment of the Soudan."

The Correspondent said—

> "We cannot blame these people for rising when no definite sign is shown of establishing a permanent Government here;"

and he added these important words—

> "If Her Majesty's Government do not act promptly, General Graham's victory will go for nought, and with the useless expenditure of blood the effect of it will evaporate."

He begged the attention of the Government to the concluding sentence—

> "I do not believe we shall send any more telegrams, for it is no longer a question of days, but of hours."

The telegraph wire was now broken, and communication between Khartoum and Cairo was at present impossible; and, for all Her Majesty's Government knew, a grave catastrophe might have happened in that region. The Resolution he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had placed on the Paper, in his judgment, afforded the only means of escape to Her Majesty's Government from the embarrassments in which they had involved themselves and the country, and the only hope in the future for the people of these vast regions now depending upon us. It would be in the highest degree discreditable to this country if Her Majesty's Ministers, who were responsible for the Government of Egypt, were now to abandon the Soudan to slavery and barbarism. The only satisfactory settlement of the disorders would be the appointment of a British Governor General to restore order, and to develop civilization in those countries, in friendly co-operation with the Sovereign Power. His proposal was perfectly feasible, and had practically been resorted to before. Both Sir Samuel Baker and General Gordon in previous years had held, for a brief period at any rate, complete command in those regions, and that complete command had been exercised with the most beneficial results. The gravity of the situation was not confined to the Soudan. Another newspaper Correspondent, the Correspondent of *The Standard*—telegraphed on Thursday that the serious state of affairs in Egypt was causing the gravest apprehension—

> "A steady downward movement towards chaos having set in. Not only were brigandage and crimes of violence largely on the increase, but the collection of taxes was becoming daily more difficult; dissensions existed in high quarters, which gave rise to great discontent; officials refused to work; and the people, left to their own devices, were rapidly acquiring a lawless and reckless spirit hitherto unknown in Egypt."

The Correspondent went on to say that the result of his own observation enabled him to echo the universal cry of discontent which came from all parts of Egypt as to the remarkable and manifest failure of our attempt to introduce judicial and other reforms, and at the absence of a fixed and steadfast Government. That was a most deplorable picture. General Gordon was *in extremis* at Khartoum, finding that his Slave Proclamation was completely useless, and that the Administration of Egypt itself was falling into a state of utter and ruinous chaos. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) asked the House, and through the medium of the House he asked the country, what possible alternative there was for Her Majesty's Government but to declare their policy, and, as he suggested, to announce to the world that they intended to undertake the entire Administration of Egypt, and to bring about order, good government, and civilization in the Soudan? It was the uncertainty which prevailed with regard to the policy of Her Majesty's Government that was creating the present state of confusion and disorder in Egypt, and that had brought about the recent disasters. The distinguished Prime Minister of Egypt—Cherif Pasha—whom the Government had driven from Office not long ago, while still in power, although he was at the time dependent upon Her Majesty's Government, and knew that his fate rested in their hands, was bold enough to state to Sir Evelyn Baring—

> "I earnestly beg you to submit these views to Lord Granville in the name of His Highness the Khedive and of His Government, and to request an early reply, which will put an end to our present state of uncertainty—an uncertainty which exhausts us by increasing every day the difficulties we have to overcome." — [Egypt, No. 1 (1884), p. 174.]

That was very strong language, indeed, for an Egyptian Minister completely in the hands of the Government to use, and it was just as applicable now as it was on the 2nd January, when Cherif Pasha used it. Yet that Minister had been driven from Office by the deliberate action of Her Majesty's Government. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had stated that the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Soudan, or with regard to Egypt generally, had been a policy of grievous uncertainty. He had carefully examined their policy, and he had been able to make out six different phases of policy—or rather six different policies—pursued by Her Majesty's Government within the last 16 months. The first was the policy of drift and shirking which was pursued after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir up to the 4th of January, 1884. Her Majesty's Ministers tried to disclaim responsibility; they refused to give advice which would have been beneficial and have saved thousands of lives; they kept screaming over and over again that they were not responsible. That policy of shirking came to an end on the 4th of January last, when, in their now famous Note to the Egyptian Government, they drove Cherif Pasha from Office in the most offensive way, and proclaimed what might be termed their responsibility in word, though not in deed. The next policy, even more disastrous, was a policy of reckless, helter-skelter withdrawal or scuttling out of the Soudan anyhow. The Egyptian Government was ordered to get away as fast as it could; regardless of the consequences, caring nothing for the garrisons, for the Egyptian soldiers, for the civil population, or anything else. That policy lasted until the 17th or 18th of January, when they made up their minds to come to the third phase, which was to send out General Gordon to conduct the withdrawal of the garrisons. In the first instance, their policy was one of absolute withdrawal; but, on the 18th of January, they decided to send out an English Governor General to superintend that withdrawal. That policy, however, was modified very soon afterwards by the course of events, which rendered it impossible to carry out a naked policy of withdrawal, even under the direction and with the help of General Gordon. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, decided upon attempting a sort of reconstruction of the Administration of the affairs of the Soudan, while, at the same time, they intended to withdraw as quickly as possible. That was the fourth phase of their policy. One part of this attempt at reconstruction, upon which the Prime Minister had waxed very eloquent, was the installation of petty Sultans upon their ancestral Thrones; and to that end Proclamations were issued at Khartoum in reference to domestic slavery and the Slave Trade. But the petty Chiefs could not be discovered, or, when discovered, they were found to be incapable of conducting the ordinary affairs of Government. That policy having failed, a fifth period followed—namely, a period of hesitation and dispute in the Cabinet as to the extent of military operations to be undertaken. This was from the 4th to the 12th of February. After the news of Baker Pasha's defeat arrived, Ministers began to discover, what all the world knew before, that there was a dangerous Arab revolt, and that armed interference was necessary; but before that the Mahdi had been made Sultan of Kordofan, and all that region had been abandoned to barbarism. No doubt, at that period, certain remonstrances had been made to England by the Governments of France and Turkey, as to the danger which would arise to Turkish and French Possessions if the Arab revolt were allowed to spread, and the whole Press of the world was deprecating their abandonment of this region to slavery and barbarism. The Government accordingly came to the conclusion that this Arab revolt must be put down by warlike operations. That was the fifth period, and the fifth period was partly altered and extended by a sixth policy, which was declared by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War the other day, to the great pleasure of the House, and to the utter confusion of a considerable portion of his Colleagues in the Cabinet. That policy amounted to the indefinite prolongation of the period of General Gordon's Governorship of the Soudan.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he would not say an indefinite; but, at any rate, an undetermined period. He had certainly put that construction upon the language used by the noble Marquess on Monday last.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: My noble Friend said nothing of the kind.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the noble Marquess distinctly stated that it was better General Gordon should remain for a longer period than was contemplated, rather than adopt the alternative of appointing Zebehr Pasha; and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) thought he was justified in terming that an indefinite prolongation of General Gordon's Governorship. He wished now to suggest a seventh policy—namely, his own policy, the one which was involved in the Resolution he had placed upon the Paper, and which he thought was the only satisfactory and complete solution of the difficulty. This was a solution into which Her Majesty's Government were most certainly drifting, and one which for their own interest and credit, and for the repute of the country, they ought to adopt as soon as possible. Events were marching on faster than the Government could control them. Already the Ministry had found themselves unable to abandon Khartoum and the greater part of the Soudan. They had drifted on from struggle to struggle, from war to war, from massacre to massacre, from the expenditure of £200,000 to the expenditure of nearly £1,000,000 without any reasonable cause, and without any possibility of excusing themselves. It would be far better to acknowledge openly to the country that their policy hitherto had been unfortunate through circumstances which they alone had not foreseen; that they now perceived they had been led into a mistake, and would at once repair it; and that now they found themselves obliged to adopt a distinct and resolute policy. The Government had exaggerated the misgovernment of the Soudan for the purpose of debate. If Egyptian oppression had been so gross and atrocious as Her Majesty's Government said it was, why was it they had not forbidden the expedition of General Hicks and any attempt to reconquer the Soudan in 1883? They used no steps to prevent that reconquest; and by so doing, according to their own showing, if the government of the Soudan by Egypt had been atrocious, Her Majesty's Government stood convicted of having lent their support to the attempted re-imposition of one of the most hateful tyrannies in the world, which they had themselves so frequently denounced, of an oppression worse than anything practised by the Turks. The effect of the policy of abandonment by Her Majesty's Government had been most unfortunate. The mere announcement of it cost the lives of a large number of persons on the Red Sea Coast. The House would remember that a very able authority at Suakin told them that the news had come like a thunderclap upon all who were interested in that district, and that it had utterly paralyzed General Baker's efforts. Friendly tribes who were wavering had actually made an advance half-way to Sinkat for the purpose of relieving the garrison. Their action was paralyzed at once by the news of the intended abandonment of the Soudan. These Arabs felt that they could not run the danger of continuing the expedition, without being satisfied that England intended to stand by them. The House heard now, from information which came from General Gordon, that he also was paralyzed at Khartoum in the same way, by the announcement that we intended to abandon the Soudan. And what was the town of Khartoum, which the Government proposed to give up to barbarism and slavery? It was the great commercial *entrepôt* of Central Africa; it stood at the junction of the two Niles, in a position of rare value, not only with regard to commerce, but also for the defence of Lower Egypt; Khartoum enabled the Power who held it to control the Slave Trade from the regions Southward and Eastward, and it had a population of about 40,000. It was also a position of great strategical and political value; and while he spoke of the importance of Khartoum he ought to add one word as to Kassala—a town of 25,000 inhabitants, only second in importance to Khartoum — the centre of a district of unsurpassed fertility, rich in every kind of grain, and abounding in cattle and wild animals. It was easy to retain, because it was close upon the Abyssinian Frontier. There were 6,000 civilians in Kassala; and he wanted to know what the Government proposed to do with them if they were removed to Egypt? Ministers had directed compensation to be paid for the injury inflicted by our Fleet in the bombardment of Alexandria, and also for the destruction occasioned by the incendiaries; and he presumed that the least they could do would be to support the unfortunate people whom they forced against their will to remove from the scene of their natural avocations. A good deal had been said as to General Gordon's opinion in the matter. Gordon was a remarkable man, and at times expressed remarkable opinions; but, with the greatest deference to General Gordon, there could not be the slightest doubt that the opinions of the gallant Officer were not always the same. General Gordon, before he came under the unfortunate influence of Her Majesty's Government, was undoubtedly strongly opposed to the abandonment of the Soudan; and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) believed that, in his heart, General Gordon was still opposed to its abandonment, and if he could have his own way would not abandon it. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) believed it would be far better for the Soudan and for Egypt if the Government would proclaim General Gordon, or some other capable Englishman, Governor General, with full powers to restore and sustain order. If the Government sent a telegram to that effect to General Gordon, and General Gordon then replied that he was not of the same opinion, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) would be satisfied; but he would be satisfied with nothing short of that. He believed that General Gordon was still in favour of retaining the Eastern Soudan—a vast district stretching from the White Nile to the Red Sea, and from the Nubian Desert to the mountains of Abyssinia—a territory from 700 to 800 miles in length, and from 400 to 500 miles in width. It was a district not to be despised—not a mere barren waste, but of astonishing fertility, as Sir Samuel Baker had testified. These regions were of the utmost importance to us—their trade was considerable, amounting to £2,000,000 exports into Egypt alone. Sir Samuel Baker's opinion was that if the Soudan were in English hands, in a few years we should be entirely independent of the United States both for cotton or corn. Many other high authorities, among them Lord Dufferin—one of those remarkable men whom the Prime Minister was so fond of praising in the House—had said that—

> "Some persons were inclined to advise England to withdraw altogether from the Soudan; but she could hardly be expected to do so. He had pointed out that these territories were

capable of producing an almost inexhaustible supply of cotton and sugar; and that, instead of being a burden to the Egyptian Exchequer, they might, by good management, be a source of wealth to the country, and not cost it one farthing."

Moreover, all Continental countries combined in condemning the course of abandoning the Soudan. He also had to complain of the neglect of which the unfortunate Tewfik Bey had been the victim; and must be allowed to express his firm conviction that 28,000 lives sacrificed since August last might have been saved had the Government acted with energy and promptitude. As to slavery, nothing for a long time had caused so much dismay as the declaration in favour of slavery by Gordon. Gordon was compelled to take that step by the conduct of the Government. Taking Sir Evelyn Baring's version of the Proclamation, there could be no doubt that the Proclamation had endorsed not only slave-hunting, but the buying and selling of slaves. He did not blame Gordon for that Proclamation; he had been sent out with nothing but a walking-stick, and he had been coerced by the conduct of the Government into the sanction of slavery. He was amazed that so little notice had been taken in that House of the Proclamation of the Mahdi as Sultan of Kordofan—a savage, sensual conqueror, whose hands were red with blood of General Hicks and his 10,000 men—while the Government was on the Eastern Coast fighting the Mahdi's lieutenant and slaughtering his followers by thousands. He asked what sort of policy was this? He did not wish to be understood as pressing the despatch of British troops to Khartoum; but General Gordon's advice to Sir Samuel Baker was that 4,000 Turkish reserved troops or Indian troops should be sent there, and the whole placed under the command of an English General, and also that Sir Samuel Baker should be proclaimed Governor General of the Soudan. He protested against the policy of Her Majesty's Government as being misleading; as being cowardly and humiliating, injurious to the interests of trade and commerce, and encouraging to slavery. It was dealing a deadly blow to the interests of civilization. He protested against the wavering and craven spirit which animated that policy, and against the Government's denial and abnegation of their responsibilities. He did not believe these responsibilities were too heavy for the spirit and genius of the English people. There was plenty of enterprize and energy and governing power left in the people of this country to undertake the burden of setting matters in order on the banks of the Nile—enough, if need arose, to deal with an Empire twice the size of the one we possessed. It was this new policy of retreat and denial of responsibility which made the task so difficult, and involved pain and disgrace on this country, and caused nothing but loss of life and suffering and ruin to the unfortunate people with whom we were brought into contact.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in rising to move the following Resolution of which he had given Notice:—

"That this House is of opinion that the necessity for the great loss of British and Arab life, occasioned by our Military operations in the Eastern Soudan, has not been made apparent,"

said, he did not know if the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) represented the views of the Conservative Party as regarded the matter under notice; but if he did, all he (Mr. Labouchere) could say was that the policy advocated by them could only be expressed by the one word "grab." Still, there was some excuse for the hon. Gentleman. On one pretext or other we were to take every country that we considered rich and beneficial to us. We were to take Egypt and the Soudan, and then go forward and take other countries, until at length we came down to the Atlantic and South Africa, the whole Continent being one great Empire. That, fortunately, was not the policy of the Government. But while the Opposition criticized the action of the Government in this way, the Radical Members had also a complaint to make against them. The Vote of Censure was rejected in consideration of certain pledges, or rather assurances, being given by the Government with regard to the limitation of their military operations near Suakin. It was understood with regard to that port that we had entered into some general pledge to maintain the independence of Egypt against any attack from the Soudanese, not only in Egypt Proper, but in what were called the ports of the Red Sea. Soon after that, they were told that that was not the only reason operations were undertaken at Suakin, but that another object was to prevent that place being used as a port from which to carry slaves across the Red Sea. But Consul Moncrieff had expressly stated that Suakin was one of the places from which there was no slave traffic. Later on the holding of Suakin was stated to be necessary in order to prevent the Turks from being attacked in Arabia by the Soudanese. Up to the Vote of Censure it had been a policy of rescue and retire on the part of the Government; but, at that period, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, in explaining that policy, went further, and declared that, to all intents and purposes, we were now going to establish our own sway in the Eastern Soudan and the ports of the Red Sea—not against the Soudanese, but against Foreign Powers. That was, in effect, the policy proclaimed by the noble Marquess. It was a new departure; and then the Government fell back upon our old friend the route to India. Ships were sent to Suakin; troops followed, the object of these operations being declared to be one of humanity—to relieve the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar. Well, Sinkat fell before this small service to humanity could be performed; but Tokar still remained. The battle of El Teb ensued. The country were horrified at the loss of life which occurred on that occasion—they did not know what the aim and object of the slaughter was. In the ranks of the Arab Army we found the very persons fighting who it was said we were to relieve in Tokar. The Radicals had protested against this policy of the Government, but had protested in vain, being in a small minority. The battle of El Teb was then described as a defensive operation, in the sense that defensive operations were necessary in order to defend a part. He (Mr. Labouchere) had not thought much of the explanation; but he had understood the meaning of it. But what was the plea for the next advance—was it the defence of Suakin, or was it not? The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, when questioned on the matter, had been unable to give a full reply. He had simply stated that he did not think the instructions which had been sent to General Graham had been altered in any material respect. If that were so, then General Graham had no authority to advance on Berber, and it was perfectly easy for the noble Marquess to say so. The Prime Minister had already said so—that there was no intention to engage in offensive operations. Well, but an advance of 275 miles across the Desert could hardly be called defensive operations to prevent the Arabs taking Suakin. They had a right to learn distinctly what were the present policy and intentions of the Government, and what were the present orders given to General Graham. Were they simply going to defend Suakin for a month or six weeks, or were they going to advance into the country, involving themselves in hostilities against those with whom they had no quarrel? He did not know what quarrel they had with any of these tribes. They sent Gordon to Khartoum to evacuate the Soudan, and the Prime Minister told them that the Soudanese were to be left to enjoy themselves in their "ancestral homes." These ancestral homes appeared to be their tombs. How were these men to understand that they were to have their ancestral homes; but that for some mysterious cause a large number of them were to be slaughtered first? At the recent battle 4,000 Arabs had been killed, and 6,000 wounded. How were these Arabs, who had been fighting for the independence of their country, to understand our policy and their own position? They had a perfect right to go to Suakin. Suakin was in the Soudan, they were Soudanese, and had a much better right to enter the place than the Egyptians or the English. The Soudanese had a perfect right to rebel against Egyptian rule, according to our own Proclamation, and yet we slaughtered them. What did we slaughter them for, he asked? He should move his Resolution, and, though he might not get many to follow him into the Lobby, yet do not let the Government be deluded by that. These massacres were most horrible and repugnant to the feelings of humanity of the people of England, who remembered that when the Liberals came into power it was not to carry out a policy of war. They wanted a distinct understanding why these Arabs had been killed, and a distinct undertaking that no more should be killed. It really seemed to him that they were serving the God Moloch, and that to him they felt themselves obliged to sacrifice a certain number of human lives every year and then retire. One year they had sacrificed to him in Afghanistan, and when they had killed enough they had gone away, saying they had no right there. Another year, they had sacrificed to him in Zululand, and had afterwards sent back to the Zulus their King. Another year, it was in the Transvaal, and there they killed a number of Boers. [MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: No; they killed us.] At least, if we lost our own men, we had done our best to kill the Boers. Then we went to Egypt on a mission of civilization, the force of which the Egyptians did not quite see. We killed a few thousands more, and made the General who performed the feat a Peer with a pension. That was not enough, however. Now it was the turn of the Soudan, and they went there and sacrificed 10,000 or 20,000 more lives. Why did they do that? The Government would not say—they appeared to desire to shirk all responsibility. They first sent General Gordon to the Soudan, saying—"He is a good and capable man. It is perfectly true he changes his opinions every day; but what of that? So do we." *The Pall Mall Gazette*, the other day, had stated that whenever Gordon was in doubt as to what course to pursue, he pitched a coin in the air and left the result to Providence—head or tail. Did the Members of the Cabinet pitch a coin in the air to decide their policy? Was it the fact that one Minister said one thing, and another another thing? The noble Marquess was a sort of Moltke in this matter. He would tell them nothing, and General Graham did not seem anxious to gratify curiosity. The noble Marquess never received any information; but it never occurred to him to ask for anything. He left it all to General Graham, and then he told them it was perfectly monstrous for the House of Commons to interfere in the military operations. If the Government did not know what course General Graham was expected to pursue and what course he intended to pursue, was it not easy enough to ask him? Let it be distinctly understood that there was no desire on the part of the Radicals to interfere with essentially military operations; but there were always political considerations connected with these operations, and it was like laughing at the House to say that they had no right to make inquiries as to probable operations at Berber, which was 275 miles away from the port Her Majesty's Government declared to be their object to defend. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. RICHARD, in seconding the Resolution, said, he was anxious to take that opportunity of recording his indignant protest against the horrible butcheries going on in the Soudan, and on pretexts which, in his opinion, without testing them by any high ideal of Christian principle, but on the ordinary principles of justice, humanity, and sound statesmanship, were wholly without adequate justification. If there were any class of persons in that House who were entitled to look back with some satisfaction to the course they had taken in regard to this miserable Egyptian business, it was that small minority, of which he was one, who, from the first, deprecated and denounced our armed intervention in Egypt as being unjust, unnecessary, and unwise, and as likely to involve us, as it had involved us, in vague and vast and dangerous responsibilities, the end of which no man could foresee. Unfortunately, hon. Gentlemen opposite could not share that satisfaction, because they, as a body, with two or three individual exceptions, were so far from disapproving of armed intervention that their quarrel with the Government was, and is, that they did not intervene soon enough, or decisively enough, or on a sufficiently large scale. And even now, so far as he could make out, though they were very chary of betraying their own notions of Egyptian policy, they were the advocates of a policy of intervention that should be unlimited both as to time and space. He held the same views that he expressed at the beginning of this business, that it was a fatal mistake on the part of the Government to invade Egypt, for it was an invasion, and an unprovoked invasion. But when he looked at the people who now most loudly condemned the Government, he found among them those who sanctioned, who encouraged, who stimulated them into the course they took, and he held that those who had backed the Government in this enterprize must more or less share their responsibility for all the consequences that had ensued. He considered that the true friends of a man were those who, seeing him enter upon a false and dangerous path, warned him against the first step, and pointed out to him the perils he must incur in that direction, and not those who stood by to goad him on, some by flatteries and some by reproaches, and who, when he had become implicated in the difficulties and embarrassments of which he was forewarned, joined to taunt and upbraid him. The Government, in his opinion, had committed two capital errors—the first, by going into Egypt; and the second, by going into the Soudan. He did not scruple to say that he was one of those, referred to the other night with so much disdain by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), who regarded our presence in Egypt as a crime and a calamity—a crime, because he held it to be criminal to attack a friendly nation who had done us no wrong, to bombard its forts, to slaughter thousands of its people, to take possession of its country, usurp its government, and lay upon it heavy financial burdens, merely because it suited our convenience to do so. The hon. Member for Orkney made, on that occasion, a most open and cynical avowal of pure national selfishness as a sufficient and satisfactory foundation for our foreign policy. He said, or plainly implied, that we wanted Egypt; that it was necessary and convenient for us to have it, on account of our Indian Possessions; and therefore we had a right to seize and to hold it. Why, that would be a justification for any act of spoliation, and reminded him of the words of one of our poets—

> "So may the ruffian who, with ghostly glide,
> Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside;
> Not he, but his emergence forced the door;
> He found it inconvenient to be poor."

It seemed to him that there was a certain number of Englishmen who held this principle—that if anything was supposed to be conducive to British interests, we had a right to do that thing, whatever violation it might involve of the principles of morality or the law of God. But he ventured to declare his conviction, which might perhaps astonish and affront some hon. Gentlemen, that there were greater and more sacred things in God's universe than British interests, and those were the interests of truth and justice and humanity. The second capital error the Government had committed was going into the Soudan. Having disclaimed all responsibility in regard to that country, they ought to have adhered to their policy. It was understood that the expeditions of Hicks Pasha and Baker Pasha were undertaken without their sanction and against their advice. It was true that the Commanders of those expeditions were, or had been, British officers, but they were not in British service; and, for his part, he had no respect for those mercenary soldiers who sold their swords to whoever would buy them, and were ready to fight anywhere, or for any cause, without the smallest concern as to whether it was just or unjust. These men went at their own risk, and, of their own accord, placed their lives on the hazard of the die, and he protested against our being called upon to protect them when living, or to avenge them when dead. Moreover, he could not see what obligations lay upon us to relieve the beleaguered garrisons. The plea urged was the plea of humanity. Well, he had no faith in promoting philanthropy by war. He could not see what "humane" objects could be attained by wholesale slaughter and devastation. And, in this case, he doubted very much whether the interests of humanity would not have been better served by our abstinence than by our action. Take the case of Sinkat. Judging by what took place at Tokar, the probability was that if the garrison had surrendered, they would have been perfectly safe; but we had encouraged them to hold out, and they had attempted to cut their way through the foe, and so were slaughtered; furnishing another illustration of the saying, for which there was good authority, that "They who take the sword shall perish with the sword." But he wished especially to call the attention of the House to the *reductio ad absurdum* of the argument of fighting for humanity afforded by the case of Tokar. The only object of the forward expedition was to relieve the garrison of Tokar. So said the Prime Minister, so said General Graham; for, after the first battle, he issued a proclamation in which he said—"The object of the expedition is achieved—Tokar has been relieved." But Tokar needed no relief.

It had surrendered nearly a fortnight before we went near it, and a portion of the garrison was found afterwards fighting *con amore* with the enemy against us. And when we took possession of the town, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War told us that there were some 700 persons within its walls, who apparently were dwelling there safely and contentedly under the protection of Osman Digna's army, their only danger having arisen from our appearance there, as shown by the remarkable telegram cited by his (Mr. Richard's) hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), which stated that, after the battle, the Arabs were threatening to massacre them in revenge for their defeat. So that it came to this, that we slaughtered 2,000 or 3,000 Arabs to relieve Tokar, which needed no relief, and to rescue 700 persons, who were in no danger save from our intervention, and we called that rendering a service to humanity. He had no doubt as to the perfect sincerity of the Prime Minister, when he said that we went into the Soudan in the interests of humanity, nor did he doubt that it was that prospect and hope which reconciled him to the expedition. But when the control of events in that country was placed in the hands of naval and military officers, it was not difficult to predict the result. He was not going to say anything disrespectful of the Military Profession. It was not a profession that he admired. To his feeling it was a dreadful profession; but it was a profession—the business of the soldier was to fight, and it was no wonder if he liked to have an opportunity of fighting; but it was difficult to conceive of anything more mischievous than to place the issues of peace and war at the discretion of naval and military officers, who had placed before them some of the strongest temptations that could assail the human mind in favour of fighting. They knew that if they were victorious, however great might be the odds in their favour and against the enemy, they would be hailed as great conquerors; they would be covered with the most extravagant eulogies; that all kinds of honours—decorations, titles, pensions, would be lavished upon them in unmeasured profusion; that they would become the idols of society, fêted and feasted, flattered and caressed; and in the hands of men so tempted we put the issues of peace and war, upon whose decision the lives of hundreds or thousands of human beings depended. And so, in this case, of course, when the discretion was left with the military, they fought. He never spent a more miserable day than he did last Sunday week. As he watched the crowds of men and women flocking into our churches and chapels—churches and chapels professedly dedicated to the worship of Him whose special and characteristic title was the Prince of Peace—another picture obtruded itself on his imagination in spite of himself, that of scores, hundreds, thousands of men lying weltering in their blood in that remote Arabian country, many of them doomed to prolonged and lingering agony; and all this havoc was committed upon them by the hands of English Christians, and for no offence that he could find except that they were defending their country against invasion. He regretted more than he could express that the present Government had got itself involved in this tremendous fiasco. It was impossible to see where this business would end; but he took this opportunity of recording his solemn protest against our invasion of Egypt in the first place, and then against our entering the Soudan, and still more against any further military operations when every pretence for them had been removed.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is of opinion that the necessity for the great loss of British and Arab life, occasioned by our Military operations in the Eastern Soudan, has not been made apparent,"—(*Mr. Labouchere,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that, in the two speeches with which the debate had commenced, the House had had the advantage of hearing a clear statement of two opposite schools of foreign policy, which had at least this in common, that they were both schools of extreme thought. On the one side they had the speech of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), who placed before the House the most far-reaching schemes of policy. The vision of the hon. Member seemed only to be bounded by the limits of the Continent of Africa. The hon. Member appeared to be anxious, as far as he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was able to follow him, that this country should undertake the responsibility of the government of the Soudan in its widest sense, and that, hardly satisfied with that, we should step further than the limits of the great watershed of Central Africa, and should arrogate to ourselves extensive rights over regions upon the banks of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic; for the hon. Member thought fit, in that wide and comprehensive style with which the House was so familiar, to allude to matters not only in Egypt and the Soudan, but also on the Congo; and he seemed to think that these questions ought to be treated together, and that the influence of England ought to be made predominant on the banks both of the Nile and of the Congo. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) really must ask the permission of the House to leave the Congo alone for the present, and to confine whatever observations he might have to make to the subject immediately before the House, which in itself was quite far-reaching and wide enough. So, on the other side, in reply to the hon. Member for Eye, there was the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who moved a Resolution to the effect that the recent military operations had not sufficient justification, and criticized Her Majesty's Government for having originally gone too far, and for being inclined to go too far now. The two speeches, to a very great extent, answered each other. He thought that it must occur to most hon. Members that when there were two schools of thought like those respectively represented by the hon. Member for Eye and the hon. Member for Northampton, in all probability political truth lay somewhere between them, and that the course advocated by neither school was really that of real wisdom. He wished to call the attention of the House to the actual words of the Motion which the hon. Member for Eye had placed upon the Paper, but which he did not move. The hon. Member had intended to call attention to the enforced abandonment of Khartoum and of the Eastern Soudan, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it will be highly discreditable to this Country if Her Majesty's Ministers, who are responsible for Egypt, abandon those territories to slavery and barbarism, and that the only satisfactory settlement of the disorders in the Soudan will be the appointment of a British Governor General, to restore order and to develop civilization in those Countries, in friendly co-operation with the Sovereign Power."

The House must see in a single moment what a very large and comprehensive plan that Notice of Motion unfolded. The effective portion of that Motion was that there was to be a British Governor General appointed for the whole of the Soudan. He ventured to ask the House whether that was a subject which it would, on a Saturday afternoon, and at a Sitting called more for the purpose of discussing certain Votes in Supply, be willing even to enter upon, much less to decide? The empty condition of the Benches of the House was a sufficient answer to such a question. After the long debates that had recently taken place upon the Egyptian Question, the House could not be anxious to plunge again into this large question, more especially when the large proposition of the hon. Member had not, in the main, been supported by any new argument, he having contented himself by again bringing up those allegations and assertions which had been prominent in former debates, and which made him (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) think that he was listening to a second edition of the speeches which the hon. Member also had made in the discussion upon the Vote of Censure and in Committee of Supply, when the whole Egyptian Question was fully gone into. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) desired to notice, and take exception to, one assertion which the hon. Member was fond of repeating in his speeches, not only this but last year — he meant his repeated assertion that this country was not upon good terms with the German Powers, owing to the policy of the Government. As on former occasions, so again he begged now most clearly to contradict the truth of the hon. Member's assertion. He believed that at no time had the relations between this country and the two great German Powers been more friendly or more cordial. The hon. Member appeared to have gathered his information on this point from foreign newspapers which did not hold the highest position abroad. Not only were our relations with those Powers most cordial, but Her Majesty's Ministers were fully sensible of the very great importance to this country of maintaining the most friendly relations with those Powers. The hon. Member had spoken of General Gordon as being *in extremis.* That was one of the hon. Member's characteristic phrases, phrases of exaggeration, with which the hon. Member liked, as it were, to deafen his own ears and to alarm himself. It was perfectly true that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War had informed the House just now that a steamer had been fired upon near Khartoum, and that the telegraph wires had been cut. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) did not wish to make out that that intelligence was not the cause of anxiety to Her Majesty's Government; but there was no need for the note of alarm sounded by the hon. Member, in order to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the fact, the importance of which they were fully aware of. The hon. Member for Eye, as on a former occasion, had thought fit to justify his proposition by quoting the authority of Mr. Power, whom he described in one part of his speech as Her Majesty's Consul at Khartoum, and in another as Agent General. Mr. Power was a man of distinguished bravery, and he had remained at his post at Khartoum, notwithstanding that he had had full permission to leave, when the town appeared to be in danger. That being so, it was all the more unfair to bring up alleged quotations from conversations, when, in reality, a good deal would turn upon particular words, the exact character of which could hardly be known to hon. Members, which quotations might place Mr. Power in a very unfair position. In these circumstances, he must protest against such quotations being brought forward. Then the hon. Member went on to refer to the internal condition of Egypt. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was sure it was not the wish of the House to enter on that subject; and, until the question was gone into thoroughly, he did not think there was much use in entering upon individual points. The hon. Member also referred to the position of Kassala, and as to what was being done with regard to a possible advance upon Berber. With regard to that point, General Graham's present instructions did not admit of such an advance. With regard to Kassala, Her Majesty's Government had no reason to suppose that that garrison was being hard pressed; but, even if it were, they believed that when the moment came to withdraw the garrison, the withdrawal could be easily accomplished, because of the friendly disposition of the neighbouring King of Abyssinia. On the Vote which would shortly be moved there appeared a part of the expenses of a mission, which was to attempt to come to terms with the King of Abyssinia in regard to those various points which, for some time past, had been causing a difference between the Government of Abyssinia and the Government of Egypt. The House was aware that the Governments of Egypt and Abyssinia had long been separated by certain difficulties—frontier difficulties regarding the possession of the inland districts of Bogos and Galabat and the commercial access to, and sovereignty over, the Port of Massowah and the adjoining coast. There were also certain religious difficulties in regard to the facilities for the consecration of the dignitaries of the Abyssinian Church by the representatives of the Coptic Patriarch, all of which awaited settlement. The Abyssinian Church, he need not remind the House, was a Christian Church, a fact well known, he believed, from the interesting account of it in the work of the late Dean Stanley on the Eastern Churches. All these points it was hoped to settle, and it was clear that if a settlement was arrived at, the retreat from Kassala and the neighbouring garrisons would be greatly facilitated. Reference had been made to what his noble Friend the Secretary of State for War had said the other night, and the hon. Member for Northampton had attacked the Government for alleged inconsistencies in their policy relating to the Red Sea Coast. The hon. Member said that the first allegation on the part of the Government was that the possession of parts of that coast would facilitate operations with respect to the Slave Trade, and that the Government had since dropped that line of argument and adopted another. That other he called "our old friend—communication with British India." No doubt, those two arguments were different, but they were not inconsistent. There was nothing upon which the House was more unanimous than the suppression of the Slave Trade; and what the Government maintained was that the Red Sea Coast ought not to be in the hands of any Power which might desire, either openly or secretly, to encourage slavery. The suppression of the Slave Trade was a British interest, and there were no places, as his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton had pointed out, where greater facilities existed for running in cargoes of slaves, than certain points on the shores of the Red Sea. The coast, therefore, must be closely watched, if the Slave Trade was to be be put down at all. Only last night, the Committee of Supply voted the money for an increase of the Slave Trade grant; and as he stated, in the debate on the Vote of Censure, the arrangements with regard to the suppression of the Slave Trade which were in future to be carried out would cover the whole Eastern Coast of Africa from Zanzibar to Suakin. The Zanzibar Agency had been re-organized, and the whole cost of it taken over by the Foreign Office; a considerable increase in the Consular Staff had been made on the Coast from Zanzibar to Suakin inclusive, although, owing to the Consul at Suakin, Mr. Baker, receiving, though only temporarily, the Khartoum salary, he had not had to include the cost of that Consulate in the Vote at present. It was also an incident in the contract made, and now paid, by the Foreign Office, instead of by the Post Office, with the British India Steamship Company, that they were to give special facilities for the movements of these Consuls South of Aden; and by the activity of those gentlemen, combined with that of the Consul at Suakin in the Red Sea, they believed that, along the whole East Coast of Africa, they would so trouble the movements of the slave dealers as to accomplish that which had been universally recognized to be so desirable—namely, to cut off the access of the slave dealers to the slave markets; and there would be that constant supervision of the coast which would be the cause of great trouble and annoyance to the slave traders, because they would never know when they would be pounced upon. The result would be that the operations of the slave traders would be exposed to such uncertainty and trouble that the Government believed that the trade would rapidly decrease. Therefore, from a Slave Trade point of view, there was a great deal to be said for the statement of the Government, that it was most important that the Red Sea Coast should be under the control of some civilized Power. Another argument in connection with the Red Sea Coast, which was put forward by his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board and the Secretary of State for War, and which he himself did not shrink from, was that the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, like the Suez Canal, were British interests also, because they were the road to British India. The communication between the Mediterranean and British India was a matter of interest to this country, and would always be so. This country, as he had explained in some detail in the debate on the Vote of Censure, had always asserted an interest in those seas. Aden was one of the most valued possessions of the British Crown; and the maintenance of the lighthouses in the Red Sea had always been treated not merely from a commercial point of view, but also as a political question of great moment. The acquisition of the Island of Perim had always been regarded as a bright ornament in the history of British naval enterprize. He would again remind the House that this country owned the two small islands of Moussa and Aubad in those seas. Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State for India, had also, with great sagacity, made a Treaty in regard to the Island of Socotra which prevented any other Foreign Power acquiring it. The possession of those islands was a proof that they desired that the possession of the land and territory in the neighbourhood of the Red Sea, and especially about its mouth, should be a matter in regard to which this country should have a voice. All these facts showed that, quite irrespective of Party, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden were regarded as British interests, and had been so for years. In conclusion, he would say that he had listened also with great interest to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthy Tydvil (Mr. Richard). He welcomed the hon. Member on his return to take part in their debates; for whether or not any

Member of that House agreed with his hon. Friend, he was sure that all regarded him with respect and sympathy for the perfect consistency which he had always manifested in the expression of his principles. It was not the good fortune of the Government always to be in agreement with his hon. Friend, deeply as they sympathized with his principles; but he would none the less hope, although his hon. Friend had on that occasion expressed the intention of voting against the Government, that he might long be spared to promote that great cause of peace which, let him assure him, was valued deeply by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. BOURKE said, he was sorry that the noble Lord who had last addressed the House (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was not in his place at that moment; but he had no doubt he would return before very long, as, of course, he (Mr. Bourke) would have liked to have addressed the few observations he he was about to make more to the noble Lord himself than to any other person in the House. The speech of the noble Lord was remarkable both for what it did contain and for what it did not contain. It certainly did not contain one scrap of information on those points on which the House wanted information. Neither did it deal with the very exhaustive and powerful speech of his (Mr. Bourke's) hon. Friend the Member for Eye, and only very slightly with the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The noble Lord did refer to some of the points of the speech of the hon. Member for Eye; but they were by no means the most important part of the speech. They might be said to embrace only the fringe of the subject. The same remark applied also to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. The noble Lord said that the two speeches to which he had just referred represented two different schools of thought, and that the policy of the Government steered a course which lay between the two.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that what he had said was that political truth probably lay between the two extremes.

MR. BOURKE: Exactly; and it was only natural to suppose that the Government had followed what they conceived to be the political truth. As a result, this country, Europe, and the people of Egypt believed that "political truth" and Her Majesty's Government had fallen between two stools. What they quarrelled with the Government for was, that they had adopted one policy—representing one school of policy—at one time, and another, representing another school, at another time. The natural result was that disaster and confusion and the condition of things in which they found themselves at the present time. The noble Lord must have amused the House by his concluding remarks addressed to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard). The hymn of peace in the future which the noble Lord sung at the conclusion of his speech was strangely inconsistent with the action of Her Majesty's Government from first to last, and particularly with the events now taking place near Suakin. The noble Lord was, no doubt, perfectly sincere in the observations which he addressed to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil; but if he spoke in the same strain to his Colleagues, he might well say, in the words of the Psalmist—

> "I am for peace, but when I speak
> They are for War."

Certainly, that had been the result of the deliberations of the Government. When the noble Lord put forward the policy of the Government as a policy of peace, one might say with Hotspur—

> "Never did bare and rotton policy
> Colour its workings with such deadly wounds."

For every step they had taken had brought them into deeper and deeper difficulty. From the time they had thrust the Sultan out of authority in Egypt every step they had taken had been marked by blood and carnage. The only subject which the House had been anxious to hear discussed by the Government was that of slavery; and as that was the last opportunity on which they would be able to discuss the policy of the Government with regard to Egypt, he thought it was desirable before the debate closed that they should have some further explanation of their future intentions than they had at present. The noble Lord, however, had told them nothing. He had certainly told them something with respect to the Slave Trade—that they had come to an arrangement with the British India Steam Packet Company which would enable them to go to the places where the trade was carried on; but he (Mr. Bourke) thought that the contract with the Company which was lying on the Table did not apply to the Red Sea Coast at all. The only contract which existed was for ships to go between Aden and Zanzibar.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: What I said was, that the number of Consuls on the East Coast of Africa had been increased, and that it was a particular article of this contract that the Company should give facilities for carrying these Consuls about. I also stated that arrangements had been made, by which one one of the Consuls was to have been sent to the neighbourhood of Suakin, but that Consul Baker, who was the Khartoum Consul, was brought down to Suakin, so that the particular appointment did not figure in the arrangements.

MR. BOURKE said, the noble Lord took credit for making the contract; but that did not alter his point at all, because the contract did not apply to that part of Africa—the Coast of the Red Sea—which was the subject of their discussion. But it seemed to him to be a small point, and he should not have alluded to it if the noble Lord had not made so much of it. These Consular matters were of no importance whatever, for now that a Proclamation had been issued legalizing slavery in the Soudan, there would not be the same carriage of slaves across to Arabia as there had been, because the slave traders, now that the status of slavery had been recognized, would find a sufficient market in the Soudan itself. The great and urgent question was, what steps were they going to take to protect those responsibilities which they had undertaken in the face of Europe with regard to the protection of the ports in the Red Sea? They were responsibilities such as were absolutely new and unknown to this country, and had been enforced upon them because they would not undertake lesser ones. He had no faith whatever in the policy of keeping these ports in the littoral of the Red Sea being effective, either in preserving the peace of the Soudan, or of stopping the Slave Trade under the conditions upon which Her Majesty's Government had now placed slavery. By their Proclamation they had legalized the Slave Trade in the Soudan. The Government had made a capital error in their Soudan policy. No Government could ever exist in Egypt without a peaceful Soudan; and he had no faith in the arrangements which the Government said they were making for the government of the Soudan. The restoration of the Sultans, if there ever had been any, would lead in the end to anarchy. He could not believe, neither did he believe the people of the Soudan would, in a policy which proclaimed the Mahdi Sultan on one side of the Soudan, while his first lieutenant, Osman, was attacked and his people slaughtered on the other by the British Forces. It was a state of things, moreover, which he did not believe the people of the Soudan would ever understand, and until Her Majesty's Government changed their policy, he did not believe they would ever have peace in the Soudan. The Prime Minister had stated that General Gordon's mission was a peaceful one; but the country was utterly unable to understand what his policy was, for it was an assertion which bewildered this as well as other countries. The operations at Suakin and Tokar had been carried on with the consent and approval of Gordon, and the Government were clearly responsible for that policy. It was upon that question that the House wanted information. Her Majesty's Government had made themselves responsible for his policy, and the House wanted to know something about it, and he hoped that before that debate concluded they would have some information as to what that policy was. Apart from the question of the Slave Trade, they wanted to know, was the Government of the Soudan to be given back to Zebehr Pasha, or to somebody whose views differed from Zebehr Pasha's? He believed that the country was utterly deceived and dissatisfied with the policy of Her Majesty's Government; and that, if things did not alter, it was perfectly clear that for the whole of that Session the House would be in a state of irritation with regard to Egypt. In his opinion, the time had come when Her Majesty's Government ought to declare that they were met by such difficulties in their Egyptian policy in Parliament that they ought to say that it was impossible for them to carry on the Business of the country. What he said, therefore, recognizing the fact of an irritated House of Commons, and that questions would be constantly arising with regard to Egypt, was, that the best thing Her Majesty's Government could do was to take that Constitutional course which every other Government would take under a similar circumstance—to appeal to the people of the country as to whether they ought, or ought not, to change their policy in Egypt. He was quite satisfied that the Legislative Business of the country could not be satisfactorily carried on under the present circumstances, or until they had a satisfactory policy in Egypt. Things were steadily getting worse and worse. When he (Mr. Bourke) had spoken previously of the dissatisfaction in Egypt, the Prime Minister had said he spoke from unauthentic information; but every report they had from that country showed that the people were getting disgusted with us, and were very much dissatisfied with our government. Those who had formerly looked upon us as friends, now regarded us as enemies. No reforms had been carried out in Egypt—["Hear, hear!"]—hon. Members might say, "Hear, hear!" but, considering our vast interests there, that was not a question to be trifled with. The President of the Local Government Board had said that we were in Egypt for three reasons. From necessity, in consequence of Treaty rights, and on account of our interest in the Suez Canal. Those were vital interests which it was the duty of the Government to preserve, but which they had gravely imperilled. He was confident that he had never said as much with regard to the anarchy which prevailed as he might have done. Beyond all this, however, there were the assertions with which the Government went to Egypt—that they would put down anarchy, restore order, and give to the Egyptians all the blessings of a free people. How had those assertions been borne out? Every step they had taken in that direction, and especially the miserable Constitution they had given the country, had proved an utter fiasco. Lord Dufferin had told them it would be so unless they supported it, and they had utterly failed to support it. They had swept away one system of government and had not substituted any other for it, leaving the country with no system at all. He did not know what the intention of his hon. Friends was; but when he read the words of the Motion he said it was a truism, and he for one would not vote against it. He trusted that the Government would tell the House that they meant to restore peace to the Soudan, and that they meant to stay in Egypt until they had established a very different government from that which was carried on now by the puppets who were in nominal authority, and that they would support such a government so long as British Forces were in the country. With respect to the Motion before the House, which affirmed that the necessity for this recent taking of life was not apparent, it was impossible, from the scanty information, and from the want of justification which the Government had given in that House for the enormous sacrifice of life on the part of the English and the dreadful massacre of the enemy—it was impossible for him to say "No" to the Resolution.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, there were two sets of opponents to the Government's Egyptian policy. The objection of hon. Gentlemen on the other side was intelligible and consistent. That of some of his hon. Friends near him was scarcely so. Three weeks ago they voted, with alacrity and enthusiasm, confidence in the Cabinet, and approval of its policy. Now, they refused to ratify that confidence, and they wanted a day or two since to deny Ministers the means of giving effect to their policy. When the Israelites were in Egypt, they were required to make bricks without straw. The English being now there, they were required by his Friends to make war without money. His hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) detested war. So did most men. But war was often a voluntary self-sacrifice for the holiest centres of human affection. He (Mr. Cowen) was for peace. So were they all. So, too, to utilize his hon. Friend's simile, were thieves, provided they could retain possession of their plunder. There was something more sacred than life—justice; something more precious than riches—freedom. And war was often requisite to win and maintain both. He abhorred the cowardly selfishness that would wall out the circling world from their efforts and their sympathies, or that would only fight for the lowest needs of existence, and not for the nobler elements of national purpose. Honour was before interest, and duty before danger. But to go to the Resolution before the House, were the operations referred to by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) necessary and commendable? War was honourable and indispensable when civilization had to be preserved, national rights upheld, and their native country defended. Did their doings on the shores of the Red Sea come under such a category? What were they for? The Government had repeatedly pronounced the Soudan to be a costly and dangerous appendage to Egypt. They commanded —for no other word expressed their action—the Khedive to abandon it to the unchecked dominion of the slave holders and slave hunters. They despatched General Gordon to Khartoum to effect its evacuation, and to coax the tribes into allowing the garrisons to retire. Our Emissary had confirmed the Mahdi's conquests, and made him a Sultan at El Obeid. Yet we slew the Mahdi's men at El Teb and Tamanieb. By what process of political legerdemain did they reconcile scattering shot and shell amidst the Soudanese by General Graham, and peace proclamations by General Gordon? If they meant to keep the country, their dual operations might be defensible. If they meant to leave it, the fighting a week past Friday, and on Thursday last, was unmitigated murder, the stain of which no Party whitewashing would ever be able to erase. These dauntless Arabs were not our enemies. According to the Ministerial hypothesis, they were our particular friends—men they would wish to save and to serve. How, then, did they justify drenching their land with tears, and manuring it with corpses? Was there no bloodguiltiness in this sanguinary carnage? What availed their maudlin moralizing, if it could not stop such tumultous slaughter—the heart-borne anguish that, while they wrangled in wordy conflict, was stunning with the cries of death many a gentle home? Had all their holy horror of fighting for prestige evaporated, or was it all cant—intolerable cant? Attempting to rescue the beleaguered garrisons was right; but when one was slaughtered, and the other had surrendered, what need was there for further bloodshed? To protect Suakin, say the Ministers. But Suakin was never seriously menaced. The tribes should have been told that we meant them no harm. The form of sending such a message was kept, but adequate opportunity for reply was not given. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] Bring every explanation of Ministers to the test of fact, and they were resolvable only under two heads—either they intended to keep the Soudan, and they had fought for that purpose; or they intended to relinquish it, and they had fought for that illusory entity, military glory, a motive which, when the Liberals were in Opposition, was denounced by every adjective in the vocabulary of vituperation. The Government were desired to define their policy. That was almost a work of supererogation. The Prime Minister defined it years ago, when he foretold that the first site we secured in Egypt, be it by larceny or by emption, would be the certain egg of a North African Empire. The right hon. Gentleman was fulfilling his own prophecy. The site had been got—got by larceny—and a new Empire was being founded. Annex Egypt! Why, it was annexed as tightly as India. The marvel was, that men versed in affairs should have ever dreamed when we once went there, overthrew the Government, and destroyed its defences, that we could leave as easily as a crowd leaves a public meeting. Whenever England planted her authority amidst a semi-civilized people, she maintained it. ["No, no!"] He said "Yes, yes." Once there, every step she took fastened her more firmly. From the character of the two races, retention and advance on our part was inevitable. It was our destiny and theirs. We could no more escape from it than a man could escape from his shadow. Civilization marched at the rear of conquest. This experience was as universal and unvarying as cause and effect. The Government were either deceiving themselves or deceiving the country, when they fostered the hope of acting differently. Many Liberal Members bemoaned the situation. It had brought the Government embarrassments that were serious, and might prove fatal. They now realized the possibility that the Reform Bill might be strangled, not by the House of Lords, but by Egypt. But if such should be the case, who would be to blame? They would; and for this reason. It was an open secret that at least 30 Liberal Members were opposed to the original Egyptian enterprize; but they had not the manliness to say so, when their saying so might have stopped it. They saw their Friends drifting to the rapids, and they had not the courage to warn them of the danger. They were afraid to speak their minds. It might have disconcerted their Chiefs, and that would have been Party profanity. Or it might have displeased the Caucus, and that would have been treason. Now, all remonstrances were unavailing. The Government could not recede. There was no armour against inexorable fate. Circumstances, which they could neither create nor control, would guide their course. The Army of Occupation might be diminished, or increased, or withdrawn; but British supremacy was as surely settled on the banks of the Nile as on the banks of the Ganges. Its form might vary, but its essence was assured. The Prime Minister's metaphorical egg had been hatched, and the brood had taken wing. What the Government was desired to do was to acknowledge this — to shake themselves clear of the atmosphere of mystery and doubt, and apply plain words to palpable facts. Why all these Delphic deliverances, and these equivocations, about obvious and self-evident truths? If we were not the Rulers of Egypt, who were? The Khedive had no more initiatory power than the Mahdi—in some respects not so much. What did we do there? or, rather, what did we not do? We made and unmade Ministries, contracted loans, controlled the Exchequer, and decreed Constitutions. We waged war, surrendered Provinces, broke Treaties, and abrogated Conventions. We superseded Judges, supervised Courts, pardoned prisoners, and pensioned rebels. We raised, equipped, and officered a Native Army, organized a mercenary gendarmerie, and stiffened the two by British troops. We commanded the whole as directly and peremptorily as we did the garrison at Gibraltar, or a brigade at Aldershot. We planned public works, constructed roads, designed irrigation, abandoned railways, re-organized prisons, reconstituted schools, suspended newspapers, and appointed sanitary inspectors. In a word, we directed the external policy, regulated the internal administration, manipulated the finances, constrained the judicature, requisitioned the military, enacted laws, dictated the political and devised the social mechanism of the country. There was not an official, from the meanest subaltern to the most pretentious Pasha, who did not hold his post at our pleasure, and whom we could not order or admonish, coerce or command at will. If that was not government, what was it? But we did all that vicariously, by men in buckram, behind whose clumsy and forbidding lineaments we worked like a showman moving marionettes. This duplex action was costly, confusing, complicating, and deceiving. Let the Government throw off their vizor, and frankly assume responsibility for what they had done, were doing, and proposed to do. They, as his right hon. Friend the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) had said, had destroyed the Dual Control, and established a Dual Administration, which was even more mischievous. They had unsettled every institution, for no perceptible advantage, and produced a chronic irritation, which was only kept from warming into passion by the presence of English soldiers. Let them dispense with the hampering interference of sulky, incompetent, and corrupt intermediaries. Every irresolute and enigmatical utterance of Ministers only added to the prevalent pertubation. Every rumour of remaining increased the stability. Men of ability would rally to our rule, if this uncertainty was removed. They would not do so while it remained, as they feared they might suffer for supporting us. There were matters respecting General Gordon's mission that required to be, but had not been, explained. No sensible man complained of his not having initiated a Quixotic crusade against slavery. Slavery was embedded into every fibre of the social life of the Soudan. It could not be extirpated by an Army, much less by a Proclamation. But ignoring slavery was one thing, and according it plenary indulgence for the past, and open sanction for the future, was another and a very different thing. That General Gordon had done. The Prime Minister was, at first, so shocked by the Proclamation, that he said he did not like to admit even to his own mind that it had been issued. Now, however, its publication was not only admitted, but endorsed. It might bring us untold troubles. It would surely be cited against us when we came to deal with other slave-patronizing countries. It was trifling to tell us that the Proclamation had only reference to domestic slavery. The words used were "slave traffic." There would be no traffic in slaves without there was slave holding. By an incomprehensible but common inconsistency, the Government were checking the Slave Trade at Suakin and legalizing it at Khartoum. The British people would endure a great deal from the Government; but they would not stand the instalment, at their instance, of a state at the junction of the two Niles based on the grossest and most degrading vices of civilized life. It would be a standing menace to Egypt and to liberty. What authority had General Gordon to tell the Soudanese that the exalted Sultan—these were his own words—was going to send an army of the Faithful to the Soudan to reconquer the country? Had he, or had he not, warrant for making such a statement? Was his announcement that English or Indian troops were to be sent to help him untrue, or only premature? Would the same reason that had driven us to hold Suakin not drive us to retain Khartoum, either as a protected State, or an integral part of Egypt? They might resist it, but events might again be too strong for them. Certainly, they were setting in that direction. But whatever we might do, or we might not do, the worst thing that could be done was to drift into additional responsibilities. An English poet who travelled over Egypt 150 years ago, and afterwards wrote a history of the country, which might be consulted even now with advantage, described in homely verse the danger of dallying. The Ministers might usefully apply the advice it conveyed—

"Tender-handed stroke a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains;
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains."

Let the Ministers grasp their nettle, and many of their difficulties would crumble up. But if they did not do so their difficulties would be increased, and the danger would be augmented.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that he was sure that the attention of the House and of the country ought to be drawn to the fact that during this important discussion the House had not been favoured with the presence of Her Majesty's Ministers.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir— ["Order, order!"]—

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that doubtless the right hon. Baronet would take part in the debate later on, when he would have an opportunity of giving such an explanation of the state of the Treasury Bench, as regarded the absence of his Colleagues, as he might think fit.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that a Cabinet Council was then being held.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: A Cabinet Council! What did he (Lord Randolph Churchill) care for Cabinet Councils? Who cared for Cabinet Councils? A solemn agreement had been made between the authorities on the other side of the House and the authorities on his side of the House—an arrangement that was extremely inconvenient to many hon. Members—that the House should have an opportunity—the only opportunity they would have for many days of doing so—of discussing certain very important Votes connected with Egypt at 12 o'clock on a Saturday, when the subject might be properly and adequately discussed; yet of so little importance did Her Majesty's Government consider that agreement to be, so thorough was their contempt for the present House of Commons, so little did they care for the opinions of the country, so little for the opinion of their followers or for the reproaches of their opponents, that they had fixed upon the very time when this discussion was to be entered upon for holding their Cabinet Council.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, it had been perfectly open to the Government to have held their Cabinet Council at some other time. In fact, he ventured to say that the country would not have been a bit worse off if they had indefinitely postponed their Cabinet Council. A Cabinet Council at which the Prime Minister was not present was not likely to lead to much.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: He was there.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the House was beginning at last to get a little information. The House had the satisfaction of knowing that the Prime Minister's indisposition had terminated, and that he was able once more to give his mind to the consideration of public affairs, although he was not able to come down to that House.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Cabinet Council was held at Mr. Gladstone's house.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that, in any case, what an awkward position the House of Commons was in. Here they were discussing the affairs of the Soudan, and the only Representative of the Government was the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice)—at least he had no reason to suppose that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board represented the Government on Foreign Affairs—and they were discussing those affairs on certain information of a limited kind, and on certain suppositions. The Goverment were in Council, and until the House was informed of the determination at which the Cabinet had arrived it was almost useless for them to discuss this question, and the time that was being occupied in discussing it was merely being wasted. The speech of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was the most startling proof of the incompetence, the incapacity, and the inutility of the present Government. The noble Lord, in his speech, gave them one, and only one, piece of information. He gave them, indeed, the history of two Judges, and also one of the Abyssinian Church, and had elaborately reviewed in a favourable spirit Dean Stanley's work upon *Eastern Ecclesiastical Establishments*. The noble Lord had also informed them, in the most solemn manner, that it was his duty to remind the House that there were lighthouses on the Red Sea; a remark that had reminded him (Lord Randolph Churchill) of the observation of Mr. F.'s aunt in *Little Dorrit*, who had interrupted a most interesting conversation by remarking that there "were milestones on the Dover Road." There was only one grain of wheat, one item of information, in the noble Lord's speech—namely, that General Graham was not to be permitted to advance to Berber. [Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice: He had no instructions to do so.] If a certain matter was not within the instructions of the General, it was clear that the General had not power to act in that matter; and he said that they had, at last, obtained from the Government what they refused to state last night—namely, that General Graham was not to be permitted to advance to Berber. At present, that was what the Government said; but, for all they knew, the result of the consultation they were now holding was that General Graham would be permitted to advance to Berber. Let the House observe the way in which the Government treated the public. When they wanted to get Votes, either of Confidence, or of Money, they had never the slightest hesitation in leading the House of Commons into a delusion, and allowing it to remain under that delusion. He said they brought that criticism on themselves. They were endeavouring to get a Vote from the House of Commons in the teeth of some opposition, whether *bonâ fide* or not he did not know, from their Radical Supporters, by endeavouring to induce them to believe that General Graham was not to be permitted to advance to Berber, and yet they had reason to suppose they knew that the force of circumstances would be so strong, the appeals of General Gordon so irresistible, that General Graham must advance to Berber. ["No, no!"] He had been right once or twice in these matters, and he might be right again. He was right about the relief of Tokar, and hon. Members opposite interrupted him then, as they did now. He said it was perfectly monstrous, that the House of Commons should be called to vote money for operations which might lead the country into enormous expenditure and to an immense amount of liability, and perhaps danger, while, at the same time, they were not only refused information, but the Government took themselves off from the House of Commons in order to avoid inconvenient questions. He did not know whether the Representatives of the people ever before received such treatment from the hands of a responsible Government. They were told that General Graham was not to advance on the road to Berber, and the House of Commons must take that statement for what it was worth, and deliberate upon it. If that were so, it simply came to this—that Her Majesty's Government had ordered to be fought two sanguinary battles, in which the killed and wounded were to be counted by thousands, battles in which their soldiers had been butchered by the savages of the Soudan; and, in consequence of the determination of the Government not to go further, these battles had been fought for no purpose whatever. No doubt, it was stated by the Prime Minister that these battles were fought for the defence of Suakin; but they knew, from what fell from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, that, within a few weeks' time, the British troops were going to evacuate Suakin. Then, their guilt became double; for those two battles had been fought for the defence of a place which was to be evacuated. [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No.] He heard the noble Lord say so. Was the noble Lord so stupid as to say that they were going to remain indefinitely at Suakin? The climate would prevent them doing so. It was these continual reservations, evasions, and concealments on the part of the Government of which they complained; they were obliged to draw information out of them as it were with a corkscrew. Two bloody battles had been fought, not for the purpose of relieving General Gordon and opening the road to Berber and enabling the garrison of Khartoum to escape, but for the purpose of protecting Suakin, which was now to be evacuated, and Her Majesty's Government asked the House of Commons to give them money for that. The House, he would submit, had no answer to make, except one of a direct negative. He agreed with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)—that the necessity for the great loss of British and Arab life in the Eastern Soudan had not been made apparent. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON here entered the House.] The Cabinet Council had been unusually short; and the noble Marquess would, no doubt, in the course of the afternoon, inform them of the results of the Council. To go back to what he was saying, he hoped hon. Members who supported the Government would insist upon a clear statement of their policy. It was the duty of the House of Commons, before they voted a single penny, to insist upon that. In his opinion, not only had no necessity for that great loss of life been demonstrated, but they had every reason to believe that a further loss of British and Arab life must be incurred, in order to extricate the Government from the position in which they had allowed themselves to get. In the Estimates to be placed before the House, there was a Vote of £1,500 for the Mission of General Gordon. He thought they had a right to call on the Government, before they voted that money, to state clearly to the House what had been the acts of General Gordon up to Thursday, when they last heard from him—what despatches they had received, how far he was carrying out his plans, and what were their hopes. It was perfectly impossible that the Government could allow the public mind to remain in the state of anxiety in which it now was about General Gordon. They knew that his original plans had been abandoned. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War threw some doubt on the conversation reported by Mr. Power, Her Majesty's Consul at Khartoum, with General Gordon, and said that conversation was imaginary, and rested on no evidence. He did not know what the noble Marquess called evidence. Her Majesty's Consul at Khartoum held a conversation with General Gordon, and, by the authority of the General, telegraphed it to *The Times*, in London, and the noble Marquess said that it was not evidence. Till they got some information from the Government, they must be satisfied with the information thus telegraphed home. They knew that General Gordon was in great danger; they knew that he had sent away a part of the garrison of Khartoum; they knew that the tribes were in revolt between Khartoum and Berber, and they wanted to know what progress General Gordon had made, up to the moment when the Government had heard from him last, with respect to the relief of the Egyptian garrisons in various parts of the Soudan? The Government must remember that General Gordon was sent out with unlimited powers, and that the Prime Minister had distinctly said—"No matter what he does, we are responsible." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) said he would not vote with the Opposition, because it would be giving a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) was bound to say he would sooner give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury than a blank cheque to General Gordon. Her Majesty's Government had given that blank cheque to General Gordon; but, before the House endorsed that cheque, they must know what he was doing. He must have been at Khartoum three weeks at least, and he had been in constant communication with Her Majesty's Government. They wanted to know the purport of those communications before they voted money; and, if it was inconvenient to make any statement as to General Gordon now, then let them postpone the discussion. Now as to the Slave Trade question. The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had alluded to the Slave Trade, and had talked of the money that had been voted last night in connection with the suppression of the Slave Trade, taking considerable credit to himself for having put down an increased Estimate this year for that purpose. But what a waste of public money it was for the House of Commons to be voting the sums proposed by the noble Lord for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and to be, at the same time, allowing General Gordon at Khartoum to encourage and permit the Slave Trade. General Gordon had stated very deliberately, just before he went out, that the Slave Trade must be stopped at its source, and the view which had been taken up by Her Majesty's Government, that it could be put down by a few vessels along the vast extent of the coast of the Red Sea was not only absurd on the face of it, but was directly opposed to the views of General Gordon. They knew that General Gordon, with the sanction of the Government, had issued a Proclamation which authorized and encouraged the Slave Trade; and if they voted the money now asked on account of General Gordon's Mission, the House would be sanctioning his Proclamation allowing the Slave Trade. The Government had not condescended to answer any of the questions addressed to them about the Slave Trade. There could be nothing more powerful than the appeal made to them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), one of their own Supporters, who always gave them a friendly lift whenever he could, imploring them to relieve the House from its anxiety about the Slave Trade in the Soudan. Of course, no notice was taken of the right hon. Gentleman's appeal; no notice would be taken of the eloquent and powerful speech of the hon. Member for Newcasle (Mr. Joseph Cowen). They could get no information. The Government gave a blank cheque to General Gordon, and the House of Commons was called upon to give a blank cheque to the Government. The noble Lord said they were going to hold Suakin, in order to prevent the Slave Trade being carried on by the Red Sea, and that they were to give up the place after holding it for some time to the Turkish Government. Now, he found that Lord Granville, in his original despatch to Cherif Pasha, stated that it was the intention of the Government that the littoral of the Red Sea should be restored to the Sultan. So that they were now to place the littoral of the Red Sea in the hands of the Turkish Government, he supposed for the purpose of suppressing the Slave Trade, while at Khartoum, where they were going to establish Zebehr Pasha as Governor, Proclamations giving encouragement to that trade were issued. These were things which only required to be stated to show their absurdity; but they knew there was very little use in stating them in the House of Commons. While the House was discussing, the Government were holding Cabinet Councils; but let not hon. Members who objected to these things be discouraged, for there was a public out-of-doors who were watching those discussions—["Hear, hear!"]—with a keen and intelligent sympathy, and who wished to be informed, as well as a few isolated Members of the Radical Party, what were the purposes and the policy of the Government. When he thought of the events which had recently occurred in the Soudan, and of the slaughter and bloodshed which had overtaken our own troops, and the savage tribes who had resisted them, he was reminded—and he also wished to remind the House—of a speech made in 1880, at Dalkeith, by the Prime Minister to certain ladies of Scotland, who had made a presentation to Mrs. Gladstone. He would quote that speech now, simply because it exactly described the present situation, and put before the public in the clearest, most intelligible, and most forcible manner, what was the position of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I speak to you, ladies, as women;"

and he then went on thus—

> "Of all these words—peace, retrenchment, and reform—the one word upon which I will say a few more special words on this occasion is the word peace. Is this, ladies, a time of peace? Cast your eyes abroad over the world. Think what has taken place in the last three or four years. Think of the events which have deluged many a hill and many a valley with blood; and think, with regret and pain, of the share, not which you individually, but which your country collectively, has had in that grievous operation."

The right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "If we cast our eyes to South Africa"—

but he (Lord Randolph Churchill) for that would now substitute the words "North Africa"—

> "What do we behold? That a nation whom we term savages have, in defence of their own land, offered their naked bodies to the terribly improved artillery and arms of modern European science, and have been mowed down by hundreds and by thousands, having committed no offence, but having with rude and ignorant courage done, and done faithfully and bravely, what were for them the duties of patriotism. You may talk of glory, you may offer rewards—and you are right to give rewards to the gallantry of your soldiers, who, I think, are entitled, not only to our admiration for courage, but to our compassion for the nature of the duties they have been called to perform—but the grief and the pain none the less remain."

Perhaps the House might have noticed in the telegrams that morning a statement that General Graham had burnt the villages he had occupied. Might he venture to give the House one small passage of the speech from which he had been quoting, which would explain, in a very graphic manner, what that meant? The Prime Minister, still addressing those Scottish ladies, said—

> "But I am trying to point out the responsibility of the terrible consequences that follow upon such operations. Those hill tribes had committed no real offence against us. We, in the pursuit of our political objects, chose to establish military positions in their country. If they resisted, would not you have done the same? And when, going forth from their villages, they had resisted, what you find is this—that those who went forth were slain, and that the village was burned. Again, I say, have you considered the meaning of these words? The meaning of the burning of the villages is that the women and the children were driven forth to perish in the snows of winter."

In the case of the Eastern Soudan, then, they might say that the women and children were driven forth to perish amid the arid rocks and wild wastes of that country. Was it not a little extraordinary that those words, used by the right hon. Gentleman when he was endeavouring to destroy the Government of the day which was opposed to him, described precisely the military operations in which the present Ministry were engaged? After that speech to the ladies, they were told that—

> "A vote of thanks was, on the motion of Mr. Tod, accorded by acclamation to Mr. Gladstone, who then left the town, passing down rows of torch-bearers drawn up to illuminate the streets in his honour."

He would ask the Prime Minister to go back to Mid Lothian, to the locality where he addressed those ladies, and to deliver that speech to them again. He would ask him to deliver that speech again to the House of Commons in his own manner before he called on them to vote Supplies for military operations. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton, in his opinion, could not possibly be resisted. Nothing but those receiving official salaries could possibly vote against it. That Amendment asserted that the necessity for the great loss of British and Arab life in the Soudan had not been made apparent, and he should certainly support it, and he did not see how the House of Commons could do otherwise.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, at the beginning of his speech the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) called attention to the fact that my Colleagues were absent from the House; and I thought it only right and just to him to state that they were attending a meeting of the Cabinet which was then being held. The noble Lord then asked whether the Prime Minister was present at that meeting, and it is, perhaps, better that I should at once tell the House that the meeting of the Cabinet had been called at the Prime Minister's house; but, in consequence of this Motion to day, the meeting was held here, Ministers having first seen the Prime Minister, and then come down to this House. But I am sorry to say that the illness from which the Prime Minister has been suffering for some days past is by no means over. The noble Lord blamed the Government for having fixed the holding of a Cabinet Council for the very time at which it had been settled to take the discussion upon the military expenditure in Egypt. Now, I would ask the House to observe how singularly reckless was the statement of the noble Lord as to the time settled by the House for taking the discussion on the Egyptian military expenditure. This afternoon, Sir, was not settled by the House for any such purpose at all; and, at the time the summonses were sent out for the Cabinet Council, we had no reason to believe—certainly I had none—that any such discussion would take place. The Motion before us is an Amendment on the Order to go into Committee of Supply, and Supply (Civil Services, remaining Supplementary Estimates for 1883-4) is the only Order on the Paper for to-day. On that Motion for Supply there stand a large number of Amendments. I notice that there are no less than 10 Motions down upon the Paper on going into Committee of Supply. The first Amendment is with regard to the Business of the House; the second refers to the Treaty with Portugal; the third relates to the British Museum; the fourth concerns the duties on Gold and Silver Plate; the fifth deals with the Census and the population of Scotland and various other parts of the United Kingdom; the sixth, which was brought forward by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), but was not actually moved, relates to the Soudan; and the seventh, which we are now discussing, is an Amendment of which Notice was only given at a very late hour last night. So much for the noble Lord's allegation that the Cabinet Council was called for to-day in order that Ministers might be absent from this discussion. The noble Lord proceeded to remark upon what he considers our decided policy in regard to the evacuation of Suakin. He must, I think, have known that the statement to which he referred was a statement as to the evacuation of Suakin by the expeditionary force under General Graham, and he represented to the House that the statement was that Suakin was to be evacuated by the naval force as well, for he said that we were for giving up Suakin altogether. It is the case that Suakin is not a place in which it would be desirable to keep a large force of British troops for several months, nor, indeed, in which it would be desirable to keep them a week or a day longer than is absolutely necessary even at present. The climate is not one in which it is desirable that a British force should be employed at all if it is possible to avoid it; and the very reason for these operations was that the force should not be kept at Suakin at this season of the year. The House approved the policy of General Graham's expedition being sent to Suakin. General Graham's forces being at Suakin, they could not have been withdrawn if Osman Digna's camp had been allowed to remain within 10 miles of that port. The noble Lord speaks as though these unhappy Arabs were in the place where they habitually dwelt. That, however, is not the case. They were collected together from various quarters for the purpose of menacing or attacking Suakin; and, as a matter of fact, less than 200 Arabs usually live in that particular valley. It would have been, therefore, necessary, I repeat, for General Graham's force to have remained at Suakin if Osman Digna's troops had been allowed to remain in the vicinity of that town. The noble Lord went on to speak about the Slave Trade, and he quoted General Gordon's well-known words, that the Slave Trade ought to be stopped at its source. Was it candid of him to endeavour to lead the House to believe that the source of the Slave Trade of which General Gordon spoke was in the Soudan? ["Oh, oh!"] That source is on the Upper Congo. General Gordon has stated, over and over again, in documents that are before the House, that if he is allowed to carry out the policy of the evacuation of the Soudan and to leave the Soudan, then it is his ambition to proceed at once to the upper waters of the Congo. ["Oh, oh!"] It is not for me to say where the source of the Slave Trade is. I myself know nothing about it. But General Gordon, who has much more knowledge of the matter, says that that source is the Upper Congo; and he has informed the public that if he is allowed to complete the evacuation of the Soudan, he then wishes to devote the remainder of his life to the suppression of the Slave Trade on the upper waters of the River Congo. The noble Lord told us that the public out-of-doors are watching this discussion, and that statement was cheered by some hon. Gentlemen on this side, who must think that if the people out-of-doors have been in the habit of watching the utterances of the noble Lord, they cannot have received any strong impression of his consistency. The noble Lord loudly cheered the statement made by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), in his vigorous speech, that the Arabs were not warned that we were going to attack them; or that, if they were, we did not wait for any reply. The statement of the hon. Member for Newcastle was inaccurate, because we did wait to receive a reply, and we received two replies to the communication we made to them. But the noble Lord went far beyond that statement which he cheered; for he accused General Graham of corresponding with these Arabs in the English tongue. [Lord Randolph Churchill: I merely asked the question.] The noble Lord smiled as he made that explanation. I have before complained that he always makes his boldest assertions in the form of a request for information. His suggestion in this instance was that General Graham had written his letters to Osman Digna and the Arabs in the English tongue, there having been no statement whatever in any of the newspapers to justify the putting of such a question. The noble Lord's serious contributions to our debates are few and far between, because he takes an inconsistent line for attacking the Government. Any stick is good enough to beat a dog with; and any argument is good enough for the noble Lord when he wishes to throw something at the head of the Government. He told us the other day that the fighting at Suakin involved the most atrocious massacre ever witnessed in the history of the world. I allude to the extremely dramatic speech he made a few days since. He called it anti-Christian.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I used no such expression.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The noble Lord said "anti-human."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The noble Lord repudiates the expression "anti-Christian," and the hon. Member by his side (Mr. A. J. Balfour) says the words used were "anti-human." Well, I have not his speech with me; but, at all events, he spoke with the greatest excitement, and he applied the most violent language to the military operations which have taken place. That is a matter which I leave the noble Lord to settle with the Gentleman who is to stand as his Colleague in contesting the representation of Birmingham at the next General Election—Colonel Burnaby.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Colonel Burnaby was acting under the orders of the military authorities. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Order!"]

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: He has been thanked by the General.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I was under the impression that he was visiting Egypt as a traveller. [*Cries of* "No!" *and Interruption.*]

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: He was not.

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is entitled to proceed without interruption.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I believe it is the fact that Colonel Burnaby himself asked that he might be attached to the Army in a nominal capacity, and that he was not sent out by the Government from this country to act with the Army, but went to Egypt as a traveller, and was attached in some honorary capacity to the Intelligence Department; but it was not necessary that he should have taken part in the fighting at the battle of El Teb by firing on Arabs with a shot gun. As to the policy of keeping the troops at Suakin, I can only say that the House has approved of the policy of General Graham's expedition. In the last debate in which that policy was questioned, we were distinctly asked if any attack would be made on Osman Digna's fortified position in the event of his remaining in the neighbourhood of Suakin. Our reply then was the same as before. We asked—Does, or does not, Osman Digna's force threaten our position at Suakin? We stated that it could not be allowed to do so; but that if his force dispersed it would not be followed. The same statement was made to Osman Digna himself, and that the information reached him is proved by the fact that the letters sent by General Graham were replied to. But I say that, as Osman Digna's forces did not disperse, but continued to threaten Suakin, if General Graham's expeditionary force was not to remain there indefinitely, it was necessary that Osman Digna's troops should be dispersed. The hon. Member for Newcastle asks us whether we are fighting for military glory? I ask my hon. Friend to believe that nothing in the world would ever induce me to be a party to fighting for military glory; and if I did not believe that the position of Osman Digna, in a fortified camp, within 10 or 12 miles of Suakin threatened our position at Suakin—if I did not believe that a fair opportunity would be given to the Arabs to leave their position, nothing would induce me to support, by vote or speech, the military operations which have taken place. The hon. Member for Newcastle said that Suakin was not in danger, and that the town could have been defended against attack.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: After General Graham's first victory.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Even then, it must be remembered that Osman Digna's force was encamped in the same position. Whether it was quite as large as it was three days before I cannot tell; but that Osman Digna, with several thousand men, was encamped at that very spot we knew, and that was reported to us. I come now to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), who attacked my noble Friend (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) for what he said about slavery and the Slave Trade. The right hon. Gentleman said that the only subject the House was anxious at all about was that of slavery.

Mr. BOURKE: I said it was the only subject attended to by the noble Lord.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: But the right hon. Gentleman attacked my noble Friend for what he said about slavery and the Slave Trade. I failed altogether to gather from the right hon. Gentleman's speech what policy on that subject he wished to recommend to the Government; but I do not believe that the House, as a whole, whatever may be the case with any individual Member—and I know there are some who are prepared to face it—nor do I believe that the country, as a whole, will be prepared to see the establishment of a Slave Power on the Coast of the Red Sea. He asked us, also, how we were to carry out the duty we have undertaken of protecting the ports of the Red Sea. The permanent protection of the ports of the Red Sea, when there is no large hostile force in the vicinity, is not so difficult or so dangerous as some persons may suppose. Those ports are very few in number. The greater part of that coast is an iron-bound coast, with only some small creeks and ports into which none but the smallest dhows can enter. The considerable ports on the Coast of the Red Sea are but two in number. It is true there are three opposite Aden; but they are perfectly tranquil, and as to them there is no reason to apprehend danger. The two considerable ports to which I have referred are—first, Massowah, which is quite tranquil; and, next, there is Suakin, which can be held in ordinary times without much difficulty. Probably a force of 100 Marines, or even an English ship of war, would be sufficient to hold it if necessary. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn, in referring to the general policy he would recommend, at the conclusion of his speech revealed the whole policy of the Opposition. The policy of the Opposition, it appears, according to what was said by the right hon. Gentleman, is to make the government of this country impossible in circumstances of very great difficulty. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not wish to overstate what was said by the right hon. Gentleman, and I will repeat the actual words he used. He said that—

> "The time had now come when Her Majesty's Government ought to declare that they are met by such difficulties in their Egyptian policy in Parliament that they ought to say that it is impossible for them any longer to carry on the Business of the country."

And then he told us that it was our duty to appeal to the people. The phrase "appeal to the people," which was the invention in England a few days since of Lord Salisbury, has been long the property of the Bonapartist Party in France, who have used it as their sole policy, and who said it was the sole policy they had to offer to the people of that country. The right hon. Gentleman asks that we should appeal to the people upon the sole point of our Egyptian policy, on the ground that he and his Friends would make it impos
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say to the right hon. Gentleman he must be aware that we shall not appeal to the country only upon the Egyptian policy of the Government, but also upon those measures the carrying of which, he told us, is to be rendered impossible by the Party opposite repeatedly delaying them by discussing and rediscussing over and over again the policy of the Government in Egypt.

Mr. BOURKE: I do not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman in his remarks; but I think it is necessary to state what I really said. What I said was, not that we meant to make the government of the country impossible, but that the conduct of the Government respecting their policy in Egypt, and their reticence with respect to it, and the many observations which they have made, have made the government of the country impossible in this House.

Mr. GORST said, he would not imitate the example set by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in treating the House to an electioneering speech. He had listened very carefully to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to see if it contained any answer whatever to the questions put by his noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), or to the question which had been urged over and over again in the House. He must say that he was very much disappointed at the extreme poverty of excuse which the Government had exhibited. Whenever they were asked to give an account of the military operations at Suakin they were only able to repeat the old story which they told the House after the bombardment of Alexandria. That bombardment was carried out because the Fleet was menaced; but it never seemed to occur to them [illegible] Fleet could withdraw; and, in [illegible] the late engagement had [illegible] ause Osman Digna's [illegible] troops, who were [illegible] vacuate the town. [illegible] tell the House [illegible] the real object [illegible] ons which had [illegible] They said they [illegible] purpose of re- [illegible] Tokar; and yet, [illegible] they still perse- [illegible] Tokar, and in slaughtering an immense number of Arabs, for the purpose of relieving a garrison which had surrendered. What was their policy and purpose in continuing these military operations? The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said that they had called upon Osman Digna to disperse. What business, he should like to know, had the Government to call upon him and his troops to disperse? If they were not at war with these Arabs, and merely went to the Soudan for the purpose of rescuing the garrisons which were now rescued, and afterwards intended to withdraw the forces from Suakin, what right had they to ask Osman Digna to disperse? Yet, because they would not disperse, they were slaughtered. The Government had made a great point, as they thought, by having issued Proclamations. In his opinion these Proclamations were all moonshine. They were not *bonâ fide* Proclamations. They were issued, not for the purpose of producing any impression upon those to whom they were addressed; they were simply issued for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of the House of Commons. They were carefully prepared and carefully recorded, and an account was sent home to this country, in order to persuade people who knew better that the purport of those Proclamations found their way among the people to whom they were addressed, in order that they might have an opportunity of complying with them, and before our troops were sent against the people. In his opinion no such thing occurred. He would guarantee that of all the thousands of men who had lately been fighting these battles at El Teb and Tamanieb, and whose homes had been burned and destroyed, not one knew that any such Proclamations had ever been issued, much less that they had ever seen them. He could not understand how a Government which denounced the policy of their Predecessors in the Transvaal on account of its "blood-guiltiness" could reconcile to their consciences or their logic the conduct they were pursuing in regard to Suakin. The Government spoke about Osman Digna menacing the safety of our troops at Suakin; but when the Boers were actually threatening the Colony of Natal, and within its territory, why did they not attack them? They said they would not attack them because they refused to be guilty of "blood-guiltiness;" but those men who said that were the very persons who, two years ago, bombarded Alexandria because it was threatening our ships at sea; and they had now slaughtered between 3,000 and 4,000 Arabs because Osman Digna was encamped 14 miles from Suakin, and could not, therefore, prevent the peaceful embarkation of our forces.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated that the House had approved of the expedition to Suakin. He (Mr. O'Donnell) was anxious to know upon what occasion the House approved of the expedition to Suakin in the sense referred to by the right hon. Gentleman? He certainly understood that the House of Commons had approved the expedition to Suakin for the purpose of rescuing the garrison of Tokar, but with no other object. He wished to know, therefore, by what authority a Cabinet Minister came forward and claimed that the expedition for the relief of Tokar had attained a scope and significance which were never contemplated when the House consented to the expedition? It was a mere juggling with words—and juggling in a sense not creditable to the right hon. Gentleman, or to the straightforwardness of an English Minister—for a Cabinet Minister to state to the House that the expedition to Suakin was authorized to carry on an aggressive and offensive campaign, when, in reality, it was only authorized to land at Suakin as a basis from which to carry out rescuing operations for the benefit of the Tokar garrison. The Tokar garrison had surrendered previous to the battle of El Teb; and it was a matter of notoriety in this country that the garrison had so surrendered. The slaughter at El Teb, therefore, was a gratuitous slaughter. The right hon. Gentleman had also laid great stress upon the alleged necessity of holding Suakin. He (Mr. O'Donnell), however, wanted to know not only where the necessity existed for holding Suakin, but the necessity for being there at all? The reasons for being at Suakin were pure assumptions on the part of the Government. Where was the necessity of suppressing the Slave Trade? In the first place, it would be necessary to suppress the Slave Trade on that side of the Soudan where General Gordon held sway, before any suppression of the Slave Trade could take place in the Eastern Soudan. Who said that the possession of Suakin was necessary for the suppression of the Slave Trade? The Slave Trade in the Red Sea could only be suppressed by cutting off the communications between the Soudan side and the Arabian side of the Red Sea. That, however, was a matter of maritime police. All the Government had to do was to strengthen their squadrons in the Red Sea sufficiently to supervise, in an efficient manner, the passage of the Red Sea by the dhows laden with slaves. He would go much further than that. If the Government desired to suppress slavery, the first thing they had to do was to restore the Abyssinian sea coast to the Abyssinians, for it was at the expense of the Abyssinians that a large and most valuable portion of that Slave Trade was being carried on by the slave traders in the Soudan. Had they gained anything, however, even on the assumptions of the Government, by the recent operations? He found that *The Times* Correspondent, in a telegram published in a stop-press edition that morning, stated that—

> "The troops are now returning to Suakin, and it is to be hoped the expedition is at an end. We can do no more. If we advance into the mountains, we can but fight the rebels when they choose to fight us, and for as long as they choose to hold out. Should we go to Berber, even under these circumstances, we could accomplish nothing, for when once the army had passed, the road would be no safer than it was before. We have now two cards left—first, negotiation, which may probably fail, Osman Digna being apparently a thorough fanatic; then a thorough supervision of the Red Sea ports and all the other outlets both on this and on the Djeddah side, by which means we can, if we choose, put an absolute stop to slavery, and thoroughly check Osman Digna and his friends. As to thoroughly subduing the rebels, who are ready to fight us wherever we may meet them, it is altogether out of the question."

But had they not that resource before slaughtering these thousands of Arabs for the purpose of stopping slavery? They had not obtained a single advantage to-day, after all this horrible and cowardly massacre, that they did not possess before. And these people whom the Government were slaughtering were said to be rebels, for *The Times* Correspondent said—

"As to thoroughly subduing the rebels.... it is altogether out of the question."

Rebels against whom? Against Her Majesty's Government? The Government were the lords of the Soudan. Against the Turk? Was he to understand that the Members of the Ministerial Bench were only the Viziers of the Sultan of Turkey in the Soudan? Was the great humanitarian deliverer of Bulgaria now nothing more than the Pipe-wallah of the unspeakable Turk? Therefore, on the pretext of defending Suakin and defending the expedition to Suakin, which was never sanctioned in the sense now arbitrarily assumed by the Government, and on the pretence of suppressing the Slave Trade, which could only be suppressed to-day by exactly the same means which were in their power previous to the slaughter, the Government had committed wanton butchery after wanton butchery, and in the history of murder and rapine there was no page more foul than that which told of the action of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. Negotiation, it would seem, was all that the Government had now to rely upon. They had now to resort to negotiation with Osman Digna, whom they had exasperated a thousand-fold by slaughtering his followers and by the destruction of his villages. Why had they not recourse to negotiation previously? The placing of a white flag on a stick in the sand was the method of negotiation according to Liberal interpretation. They published a Proclamation, forsooth! ordering Osman Digna to disperse his forces. Had they not read another Proclamation, published in the newspapers, purporting to proceed from the heads of the Military and Naval Forces of the Government at Suakin, and addressed to the tribes in the Soudan, ordering them to abandon Osman Digna, on the ground that he was a man stained by every kind of crime? Osman Digna, in this conciliatory Proclamation, was denounced to his people as a scoundrel, and then the Government published another Proclamation calling upon Osman Digna's forces to disperse. Why, the thing was a hideous hypocrisy; it was a sanguinary hypocrisy; it was leading this country into a trap, out of which there was no exit except the exit of massacre. He knew the object of this policy. It was to monopolize the Coasts of the African Continent, in order to secure the central portion of Africa, with its vast population, as a market for Lancashire and Yorkshire. It was not a wise way to set about carrying out that object. For a time they might succeed in sending into the interior of Africa sized cotton goods over a pathway composed of the corpses of the Arab population; but, in reality, they were playing a dangerous game; they were playing the game of their commercial and political rivals. In Egypt, if they had acted with discretion, they could have ruled by the love of the people. But Her Majesty's Government cast aside their opportunity. Had they endeavoured to obtain the goodwill of the Natives by conciliatory and fair means, they might have succeeded; but they had thrown away their chances, and adopted the narrow and short-sighted policy of looking only to the immediate dangers of the day. A few years ago, the heads of the National Party in Egypt were inclined to seek for a friendly alliance with the English; but their advances were contemptuously rejected. We cast aside the chance of reigning in Egypt by the love of the people; we cast down the National Party; we allied ourselves with the Tewfiks, Nubars, and other adventurous scum which had collected in Egypt for a generation, just as we were now allying ourselves in the Soudan with the slaveholders instead of the people. As a consequence of the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government, Egypt was now a difficulty on their hands, and the Soudan was a still greater difficulty; and when, in a year or two, French diplomacy had carried out its objects, Abyssinia would prove another difficulty to be confronted. France was our foe in Africa, and every slaughter of the Natives by British troops would strengthen the hands of France. What was the policy of Her Majesty's Government at the present time? Were they going to withdraw from Suakin, or march on to Berber? The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board had told them little or nothing. It was to be regretted that the Prime Minister had so severe a cold; but, at the same time, everyone who had a particle of sympathy with that illustrious individual—and even he (Mr. O'Donnell) might sympathize with him at the present moment—must feel glad that he had been spared the shame of that repudiation of all his professions which had been carried out by his Colleagues within the last few days. Were the professions of the Premier definitely thrown over, or were we once more to have a temporary return to the policy of ostensible humanitarianism? The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board objected to this discussion, because it interfered with the progress of Public Business. Her Majesty's Government thought it was no concern of the British public that the British name should be associated with rapine and slaughter, contrary to the solemn declarations of the Government. He, however, declined to accept the right hon. Gentleman as a safe guide upon policy in the Soudan, because he remembered that he was not a safe guide upon policy in Egypt. The door between the right hon. Gentleman's memory and his imagination had been too often left open—he presumed entirely by accident—to accept him as a safe guide upon the present occasion. The right hon. Gentleman told them that if they did not remove their discussions of the foreign policy of the Cabinet from the path of the progress of Public Business, then the Government would appeal to the country. Though the right hon. Gentleman said that the Government would appeal to-morrow, he (Mr. O'Donnell) should still hesitate to accept his assurance. On what ground would the Government appeal to the country? What were the soaring pinions with which they would swoop down upon the constituencies? The pinions were those of a carrion vulture, gorged with its meal of massacre —[*Laughter.*]—massacre that was the horror of all honest men, but the object of amused laughter to the Radical Party. He congratulated that Bashi-Bazouk Government upon having transplanted Bulgarian horrors into the Soudan. He must again say that among all the bloody pages in a history of world-wide rapine, there was no page more red and more foul than that which recorded the policy of assassination which the Government were carrying out in Africa.

MR. W. FOWLER said, there was nothing but truth in the assertion that the discussion then going on was initiated for no other purpose than the humiliation and embarrassment of the Government. At the same time he was free to confess that recent events in the Soudan had produced a feeling of great regret and horror throughout the country, and that feeling he entirely shared. But he was now asked to pass a disguised Vote of Censure on the Government. He was asked to say that he had more confidence in hon. Members opposite than in the Government. He could not say that. He had heard of these massacres with the greatest horror; but he was not, therefore, prepared to say that he had confidence in hon. Members opposite. The Opposition were greatly responsible for what had occurred in Egypt, and he did not forget what happened two years ago, and the meeting at Willis's Rooms. When the war was carried on, as hon. Gentlemen opposite urged that it should, they then turned round and said it was an unnecessary war. So, recently, the Opposition had hounded on the Government to undertake these operations which they now condemned. That was very inconsistent —not to use a stronger and less Parliamentary word. If he voted for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) it would be because he wanted to put hon. Gentlemen opposite into power. He would not be led astray so as to give a random vote.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, that after the remarks of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) he felt bound to say a few words, for he intended voting for the Resolution of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He did not regard it as a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government. He regarded it as partly condemnatory of the particular action to which it referred, but much more as an expression of protest as to the reserve of the Government in respect to a point which he considered of vital importance. His hon. Friend and Colleague (Mr. Joseph Cowen) was bitterly discontented with the attitude of the Government, because he was in favour, apparently, of an annexation which he regarded as inevitable—an annexation not only of Egypt Proper, but also of the Soudan. As he (Mr. John Morley) was resolutely averse to the annexation of a single inch of the Soudan, he should have been glad if his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had taken the opportunity, which he had been challenged to take, of telling the House, once for all, what was to be their policy in reference to the Soudan, and what steps Her Majesty's Government were taking, or were going to take, in order to carry out that evacuation for which they professed to send General Gordon to Khartoum. His right hon. Friend thought, if they wanted to put a stop to the African Slave Trade, they must, in General Gordon's view, get to work at the Upper Congo. He (Mr. John Morley) believed there was nothing General Gordon would rather do than, at that moment, be allowed to go from Khartoum, and betake himself to what he regarded as the serious centre of his great work. He kept asking himself what it was Her Majesty's Government were waiting for at Khartoum. General Gordon had done the best part of what he was sent to do; and he saw no method, at present, being pursued by Her Majesty's Government for facilitating the rest of that work; and when the House was told, as they were the other day by one of the Leaders of the Conservative Party, that their policy was the holding of Khartoum, then the time had come for the Leaders of the Liberal Party to tell the House that their policy was to abandon Khartoum. That might be a right policy or a wrong one; but it was, at least, the policy in respect of which Her Majesty's Government, in the first instance, sent General Gordon to Khartoum. On the 15th of January, Lord Granville, speaking to the French Ambassador, said—

> "It seemed clear that the Egyptian Government were incapable of holding Khartoum, or of reconquering the country by themselves, and whatever the feeling might be here (in London) at the moment, he was convinced that public opinion would not countenance the considerable expenditure of money, or the risk of loss of life, which must be attendant on an expedition of English troops with that object."—[Egypt, No. 5 (1884), p. 15.]

That was Lord Granville's statement, and he should be glad if some hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench would tell the House whether Her Majesty's Government still held to the policy of leaving Khartoum and of leaving the Soudan. He must be excused for being a little suspicious. He was the last person to wish to say a word, or give a vote, that would embarrass Her Majesty's Ministers; but the House had a right to be on its guard, because, in reference to Suakin, the Prime Minister, in reply to his hon. Friend's (Sir Wilfrid Lawson's) exclamation, that the sooner we were out of Suakin the better, said he thought so too; but we were there in the interests of peace and humanity, and not in our own interests. But a very few days after that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War got up and said that we were there in pursuance of British interests, because it was on the line of our communications with India. If such arguments were going to re-appear on the Liberal side of the House, he was at a loss to know why his right hon. Friends had come into Office at all. As he had already said, he was as much in favour of British interests, in their true sense, as any hon. Gentleman opposite; but he had yet to be persuaded that the holding of Khartoum, or the annexation of the Soudan, was, in any shape, conducive to British interests. On the contrary, he thought it would be a supreme British disaster. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bourke) had called on the Government to remain in the Soudan, because, if they left it, there would be anarchy in their place. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War was not afraid of that reproach when he deliberately abandoned Candahar—and wisely and prudently did so, in his (Mr. Morley's) opinion. When the Government determined on the retrocession of the Transvaal, they did not then allow themselves to be frightened our of their policy by the prospect of anarchy. When they sent Cetewayo back they knew that anarchy might possibly, and would probably, follow. But they did not refrain on that account. They thought of higher interests than the pacification of a barbarous land, and took a line which he thought then, and thought still, to be a wise line. He, therefore, hoped Her Majesty's Government would lose no time in announcing that they proposed to adopt the same course in the Soudan. Something was said by his hon. Friend about public opinion. In his view, the Government were in danger of mistaking a shadow and a phantom for public opinion, and of accepting for real public opinion an odious compound of financial cupidity, bastard Imperialism, and, worse than all, truculent philanthropy. He had only one other remark to make—and for him it was a serious one. He would go no further on this road until he was informed, on good authority, where that road was leading them to. Therefore, he would support the Resolution of his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, this debate appears to be considered by hon. Gentlemen opposite as only a means of embarrassing the Government and impeding Public Business. But I think, when the country comes to read what has been said to-day—especially by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard), and both the hon. Members for Newcastle — it will be felt that there is some truth in our assertion that Her Majesty's Government have failed in their duty of disclosing their policy to the House of Commons. Again we ask, and we shall persist in asking, what the Government propose to do, not in the far distant future, but during the next week or 10 days; and, in my humble opinion, we ought not to allow this Vote now put down in Supply to be taken until we get some answer to that question. The Prime Minister, a few days ago, told this House that, in his judgment, it was impossible for Her Majesty's Government to arrive at any decision upon their policy in regard to Egypt Proper until this chapter of the Soudan had been in some degree closed. But what is it with which we are now face to face? Two battles, which have been well called massacres, have been fought on the Coast of the Red Sea. It may be that those battles were not only justifiable, but absolutely necessary, to promote the policy which the Government have adopted; but nothing is told us by the Government but this — that what has been done at Suakin and in the neighbourhood has been done in defence of Suakin, and in order to enable the earlier withdrawal of British troops from the seaboard. I want to know what is to come of this? Those two battles have been fought. Osman Digna and his people have been defeated with terrible slaughter. Are the British troops to be immediately withdrawn from Suakin, or are they not? If they are going to be withdrawn, what are you going to put in their place in order to carry out the policy announced in the House the other evening by the noble Marquess opposite the Secretary of State for War? If they are not to be withdrawn, what is to be the further step in the policy which the Government are pursuing? Do they propose to protect the Red Sea littoral, according to the extraordinary statement of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, by telling four or five Consuls to take periodical voyages in the ships of a Company plying between Aden and Zanzibar?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The right hon. Gentleman is misrepresenting what I said. He is speaking of that part of my speech entirely referring to the putting down of the Slave Trade.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: What interest have we on the Red Sea littoral except to put down the Slave Trade? That, at all events, is what I understand to be the main object of British intervention in that region. But everybody knows that the Red Sea Coast is of very great length, full of creeks and harbours; and can it be supposed that by anything which the noble Lord has told us this evening the policy of the Government can be carried out? We are to hold Suakin and these other ports. How? We have had no information on this point. If it is the unsuitability of the climate that makes the difficulty, how do the Government propose to occupy these places in the summer now coming on? I cannot believe that the Government have allowed these battles to be fought, and have left the direction of affairs purely at the option of the military commanders on the spot, without some instructions as to the contingencies before them, and the necessities that may arise in another part of the Soudan. And what is the position of General Gordon at this moment? We have been told more than once that Her Majesty's Government consider it impossible, in the interests of the Public Service, to give us full information as to the position, views, and object of General Gordon at Khartoum. That is an excuse which, for a time, Parliament has been ready to admit. But for a time only. General Gordon has now been at Khartoum for three weeks. He went there with a definite statement of his own ideas as to the manner in which the evacuation of the Soudan was to be carried out. As we know, the Representatives of the old reigning families were to be restored as rivals of the Mahdi. But we now hear that nothing of this sort has been done. The Mahdi has been made Sultan of Kordofan. General Gordon went to the Soudan the determined enemy of slavery and the Slave Trade, and yet he has issued that Proclamation of which we have heard so much. All this would be unaccountable but for the presence of some overpowering necessity in regard to which Her Majesty's Government will tell us nothing. General Gordon went to Khartoum as the ambassador of peace. He commenced by declaring all arrears of taxes to be forgiven, and by opening the prison doors. But we have since heard that expeditions have been made up the Nile, and threats have been made that troops will be sent to subdue those who will not submit to his authority. What is the last news that has come to us from General Gordon? The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs almost laughed at any credit being given to the remarkable telegram from the Consul at Khartoum.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That is a complete misrepresentation of what I said.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Then I suppose he does attach some importance to that telegram. The following are the words attributed to General Gordon:—

> "There is a certainty that as time advances the emissaries of the Mahdi will succeed in raising the tribes between Khartoum and Berber. This is not owing to disaffection, but to fear, caused by the pronounced policy of the abandonment of the Soudan. . . . We cannot blame them for rising when no definite sign is shown of establishing a permanent Government here."

And this expectation is already being realized, for the telegram read by the noble Lord at the beginning of the Sitting was to the effect that the tribes were rising, that the telegraph wires were cut, and that steamers had been fired upon. Are the Government too late again, and is General Graham's victory to go for naught? What is the position of General Gordon at present? The noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs denied that General Gordon is *in extremis.* I truly hope he is not; but how does the noble Lord know that? The news that the telegraph wire is cut is three days old; but, looking at the opinion of General Gordon expressed in this telegram, which, until the Government say otherwise, we are justified in considering *bonâ fide*, I am bound to say that it seems to me that Her Majesty's Government are incurring the gravest responsibility in connection with the position in which they are leaving Gordon at Khartoum. Do they mean to do anything? Do they mean to utilize these victories of Graham in the neighbourhood of Suakin, in order to attempt that march on Berber which Gordon has recommended? The recommendation may be right or wrong; but it is the advice of Gordon, to whom they have committed all authority in the Soudan. If they are now going to disregard it, why are they going to disregard it, and what are they going to do in its place? What is their policy? I do not usually agree with the opinions expressed by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). On the contrary, I hold very different opinions as to the policy to be pursued in the Soudan; but I must say that, so far as the terms of the Amendment are concerned which he has placed before the House, I do agree with him. If these battles and the loss of life which we all deplore have no better result than the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the Soudan, I say they are in no degree justifiable. We ought to have some clear and definite statement from the Government; and, if we do not get such a statement, I shall certainly support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. BRYCE said, he was not surprised to hear that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) approved of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), for he (Mr. Bryce) looked upon it as being cleverly framed with the view of endeavouring to unite the votes of those who differed on every other point. He would ask his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) whether he could think that giving a vote which might turn out this Government and bring in the Leaders of the Opposition would accelerate either the withdrawal of England from Egypt or the restriction of our responsibilities in the Soudan? He trusted that the Liberal Party in that House would decline to be led into the trap that was prepared for them.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I think it is impossible for the House to go to a Division on this question with any satisfaction after the manner in which Her Majesty's Government have treated us. Some question has been raised as to what was the expectation of this discussion coming on to-day. I can only say that on Thursday night, and again last night, when arrangements were made for the course of Public Business, it was distinctly understood that this would be given as a special opportunity for discussing this subject—a subject of most pressing public importance, one as to which the House has shown Her Majesty's Government the greatest indulgence, and upon which it is really impossible that we can allow the course of Business to proceed without some clear and satisfactory explanation being given by the Government. We find, however, that the Government have absented themselves from the Treasury Bench during a great part of this debate, and we are told that this is owing to the fact that they were holding a Cabinet Council. But we all know—many of us have experience of what Cabinet Councils are—that it has been the universal practice, I think I may say, that when a special Sitting of the House has been appointed for a Saturday for the discussion of Business of special importance, the Cabinet Council, if held at all on that day, must be fixed for such an hour as not to interfere with the Business of the House. And we find that, when the Ministers who have absented themselves do come into the House, they leave us just in the same position as we were before. Certainly, the least that we can expect is that, when attention has been challenged to any subject, Ministers will come into the House to listen to what we have to say; and the treatment we have received today is, I think, an abuse of our patience and good nature. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) has been labouring all through the Session to obtain from those who agree with him something like an expression of their agreement with him, and dissatisfaction with what was going on on the Bench occupied by their Leaders, and one after another those hon. Members have confessed that the Government does not satisfy them. The hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) seemed to think that he settled the matter in a couple of sentences, when he said he disapproved of a good deal that the Government had done; but he knew that this Motion amounted to a Vote of Want of Confidence, and that, therefore, he would not support it. But I would ask him what is the value of that sort of confidence in Her Majesty's Government which is so easily satisfied? What is the state of the case? We see battles fought, one after another, each entailing enormous slaughter of the enemy and very serious suffering and loss upon our own part also; and yet we receive from Her Majesty's Government absolutely no guidance or indication as to the object they have in view in all this. We do not ask that Her Majesty's Government should tell us all the steps that they intend to take. We want to know what they are fighting these battles for. Is it, or is it not, for the purpose of opening the road from Suakin to Berber, and possibly to Khartoum? That would be a perfectly intelligible policy; but we have never been told that that would be their policy. And now to-day we are told, in an irregular way, as far as we can understand it, that it is not intended that that should be the policy of the Government. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), I think, used the expression that it was not within the instructions of General Graham to advance to Berber. Some hon. Members understood from that that it is his instructions not to go to Berber. We want to know what is the exact meaning of that? Is the matter entirely left to General Graham's discretion? Is General Graham furnished with any scheme of a policy which he is to carry out; and, if so, what is the general object of that scheme? Is the object to evacuate Khartoum, or is it to reopen up the way to Khartoum? I do not say anything about annexing Khartoum. We do not ask to annex Khartoum at all; but we say that it is of the greatest importance that you should provide, in some way, that Khartoum should be furnished with a stable and a satisfactory Government. You cannot allow the matter to drift into chronic anarchy, as I expressed it the other day, and we want to know what is your view with regard to that point? Have you still the intention to withdraw from Khartoum? Are you fighting all these battles and killing all these people to facilitate that withdrawal? I am bound to say that I think the Government have no right whatever to plead the necessities of military policy for silence upon such a question as that. We do not ask them to tell us anything inconvenient to their military policy; but we wish to have some light on these points; and we have a right, and are bound, in the discharge of our duty to the country, to inquire what the policy of the Government now is. Hitherto they have put us off with various excuses. At one time we were told, in regard to General Gordon, that the Government were not responsible for what was going on, and that, therefore, they should not be questioned; at another time we were told by Her Majesty's Government that they were fully responsible, and that, therefore, they should not be questioned; and now the Government put us off with the assertion that answering such questions might lead to inconvenience. I cannot help thinking that there were passages in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) which threw a new light upon the position and attitude of the Government. Knowing the ability of the right hon. Gentleman, and how conversant he is with all questions of this character, we naturally expected that some light would be thrown on the subject when he rose to take part in this debate. But we received very little information from him in regard to the matter in hand. His speech, however, contained some very significant hints of another kind. I do not know whether it was meant for an electioneering speech or not; but I do know I never heard such very remarkable topics as were introduced in it, just as if it could be intended for no other purpose than that of creating prejudice. When the right hon. Gentleman talks about an appeal to the people, which we say ought to be made upon such a new policy as this, he talks of it as "Bonapartist." That is the sort of language that he uses, and it is a new view for a Member of the Government like the right hon. Gentleman to take. And then there was one thing I was sorry for, and I think, on reflection, the right hon. Gentleman will be sorry for it too, and that was that the right hon. Gentleman should have descended in the middle of his speech—should have gone out of his way, in fact, to make a little electioneering attack on my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and that at the expense of a gallant officer whose name there was not the slightest occasion for introducing, and whose conduct was no part of the subject for discussion. Colonel Burnaby, he said, had been in the Soudan; and he suggested that Colonel Burnaby had no business to be there. But Colonel Burnaby, while in the Soudan, was under military authority, and I understand he was publicly thanked for his services there. Under these circumstances, I do say that a more ungenerous, a more uncalled for, and a more extraordinary reference to an individual in no way connected with the subject before the House, I never heard. We have before us a Motion upon which we are prepared to vote, and I have thought it right to say a few words before the Question is put, hoping that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War may be able to tell us something that will be more satisfactory than anything we have yet heard. The Motion that has been brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is precisely the same as the Motion of which my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) gave Notice. It is not intended to stop the Supplies, but it demands an explanation before the Supplies are granted. That is a demand which I think we have every right to make.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not intend to detain the House, in replying to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, for more than a few moments. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman has said, at the beginning of his speech, that there has been a general understanding in the House for the past two or three days that a discussion upon this subject should be initiated at the Morning Sitting of to-day. I do not know what understanding may have existed between the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who has initiated this discussion; but this I can say—that, so far as I and my hon. Friends who sit on this side of the House and the Members of the Government are aware, there was no understanding of the kind.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), at the previous Sitting of the House, at 20 minutes before 1, had asked hon. Members to withdraw their Motions from the Paper, pointing out the advantage it would be to all parties to bring them on at the Saturday Sitting, when Supply stood as the first Order.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I cannot quite see the relevance of that observation as regards the explanation of the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition. What I wish to point out, in the first place, is that I am prepared distinctly to assert that no one in this part of the House had any idea, until late last night, that this matter would be brought on at all to-day. In the next place, I would call the attention of the House to this circumstance — that last night I appealed to hon. Members who had Notices on the Paper that they should withdraw them, in order that Supply might be taken at once, and a Saturday Sitting obviated. That suggestion, I think, was only coldly supported by the right hon. Gentleman opposite at the time. He admitted that it would be convenient if that course were taken; but he seemed to have some doubt whether he would give it his warm support or not. It now appears that he all along intended that a Saturday Sitting should be taken, and that it should be devoted to a discussion of this subject. I think it would have been better, more convenient, and more in accordance with the ordinary practice of this House, if the right hon. Gentleman had yesterday stated the intention of himself and his Friends. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has also made some observations, following upon those of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), upon the action of the Members of the Government; and the right hon. Gentleman says that when it is found necessary to to hold a Cabinet Council on days when the House sits, the Government ought to take care to fix upon an hour which will not interfere with the other Business of the Government. If the right hon. Gentleman will explain what very convenient hour for holding a Cabinet Council could be fixed before 12 o'clock in the day, especially when the Prime Minister is suffering from indisposition, I shall be very much obliged to him. As the matter stands, I can only say we probably might have made other and better arrangements, if we had had the slightest idea that a serious debate of this kind was going to be raised; but, as we were left in ignorance of that, it was impossible to do so. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition have repeated their demand for further information as to the intentions of the Government; and they have, under cover, as I understand it, announced their intention of voting for the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton, in the same spirit and in the same intention as they had in supporting the Motion which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) intended to move the other day. Now, Sir, I wish to point out that although the effect may be the same, and, if the Motion is carried, may prevent Supply being proceeded with, yet the Amendment is one of a very different character indeed. This Amendment is not one calling upon the Government to give further information, and it is not one proposing to defer the grant of Supply until further information is given; but it is one which asserts that the necessity for the expenditure of life in those military operations has not been made clear; and, therefore, I understand that the right hon. Gentleman, and other hon. Gentlemen opposite, are prepared to pass a Vote of Censure upon the military and naval officers, and, consequently, upon the Government, for having undertaken these military operations. If that is their intention, I do not think the country will support them. I do not in the least complain of that course being taken; and I hope it will be thoroughly understood and appreciated, not only in the House, but throughout the country. All I desire to point out is that it is much to be regretted that hon. Members opposite did not make up their minds to take this course at an earlier moment. The hon. Member for Northampton gave them an opportunity last week of condemning these operations, when, although hon.

Gentlemen opposite did not see their way to support the Government, at the same time they did not see their way to support the hon. Member for Northampton. Well, Sir, this demand for further information may, I think, be pressed somewhat too far. I endeavoured to give, on Monday last, all the information which I thought it in my power to give then as to what was going on in the Soudan; and I really do not know that events have advanced so far, during the course of this week, that it is possible or right for any Member of the Government to make any declaration or announcement of policy very much in advance of that I made last week. Speeches have been delivered, in the course of this debate, by my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), and by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and they stated on the part of the Government what, in our opinion, it is possible to state; and, however violent may be the appeals addressed to us for further information, those appeals, I can assure the House, shall not draw from me, at any rate, or from any Member of the Government, any statement of policy, or any information, which we think would be injurious to the interests of the country—those great interests we are endeavouring to secure under such difficult circumstances. Sir, we are asked what is the object of the force which is still in the neighbourhood of Suakin. I maintain that that force has already probably—for we have no certain information—accomplished one of the main objects of its mission, and the safety of the port of Suakin and the coast of the Red Sea in that neighbourhood is now probably entirely secured; and I maintain that it could not have been so secured while the large armed force assembled under Osman Digna was still in the immediate vicinity of Suakin, not only threatening it by their presence, but openly and distinctly avowing their intention to attack it. That great object has probably been accomplished, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) wants to know whether the English force is going to be immediately re-embarked. But, Sir, before a decision is come to upon that point, we think it would be desirable that the Government should have some more certain information as to the state of the country, and as to whether there is still any hostile gathering of the tribes threatening the security of Suakin. I am also asked whether this force is now going to march to Berber, and whether that course has not been suggested by General Gordon. My noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in his speech to-day, has already stated that the march to Berber is not within the limits of General Graham's instructions; but when I am asked whether, in any circumstances, General Graham will be allowed to advance on Berber, that is a question which I distinctly decline to answer. If it were intended that General Graham should attempt to advance on Berber, or, equally, if it were absolutely decided that he should not do so, I consider that an announcement at the present time in either of these cases would be extremely prejudicial to the success of the objects in view, and also to the success of our policy. Then we are asked as to our general policy in the Soudan, and what will be the outcome of General Gordon's mission. Sir, the information we have received from General Gordon from Khartoum has not been by any means full or detailed. General Gordon himself said, long before he reached Khartoum, that he thought the important operation in which he was engaged would be one of very considerable length, and that, above all things, it would be necessary to have patience. I do not think that such a time has elapsed as to enable us to gauge it in a sufficient manner as to warrant our despairing of the success of General Gordon's mission in the manner in which he proposed to carry it out. General Gordon has been in communication with some of the leading Chiefs in the neighbourhood of Khartoum itself. He has been endeavouring to open communications with the Chiefs of the other garrisons, and he has been taking such measures as he thinks best fitted to carry out the instructions which were given to him. The Government have been greatly surprised with the recommendation or suggestion which has come from General Gordon in reference to a proposed successor in the person of Zebehr Pasha. That was the subject of communication between Sir Evelyn Baring and General Gordon while the telegraph was open, and is still the subject of communication between the Government and Sir Evelyn Baring; but until a final and complete decision on all these subjects has been arrived at by the Government — a decision which I have promised shall be communicated to the House when, in our opinion, it can be communicated without detriment to the Public Service—I absolutely decline to make any partial statement. Under these circumstances, it is open to the Opposition and the House to refuse to grant the funds necessary for carrying on the Public Business; but let them distinctly understand that, in doing so, they will raise the issue of confidence in the Government. The Government have stated, as fully as they think their duty requires, or as it is possible for them to state, what their policy is on these subjects; but if you insist on knowing that which we think we are unable, consistently with our duty, to make known, you are taking a course which deprives us of the confidence of the House of Commons, and will make it impossible for us to conduct the affairs of the country.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 111; Noes 94: Majority 17.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I rise, Sir, to a point of Order. Just after you had announced the numbers, I heard the Secretary of State for the Home Department say, from his place—"This dirty trick has not succeeded." I ask you, Sir, whether that is language which ought to be used in this House?

MR. SPEAKER: Language of the kind described by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), used publicly in this House, would undoubtedly be a great breach of the Privileges of the House. But I do not know under what circumstances the expression was used—whether it was used in private conversation, to what it was intended to refer, or whether it was intended to be heard. I, therefore, wish to draw a distinction between words used in the confidence of private conversation and words used in a debate in this House. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department will offer an explanation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no hesitation in saying that I should never have thought of using words of this character, as you, Sir, have expressed it, in public debate in this House. As to the expression of my own private opinion to my own friends upon transactions of this character, I consider myself free.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think, Sir, that whatever may have been the character of the expression—whether used publicly or privately I will not enter into—but as it is before the House at this moment, the right hon. Gentleman has no right to bring forward charges of such a character. Under the circumstances, to allow such an expression as that, in the present day, to go by unchallenged would be the grossest possible insult to those sitting on this side of the House, and we should be guilty of the gravest possible dereliction of duty if we did not call attention to it. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) was good enough to say, a little time ago, something of the same sort, but in perfectly proper language. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I believe I am perfectly in Order. The noble Marquess, I say, in more correct language, implied a somewhat similar charge. I can only say—and the noble Marquess may not have been informed of what had passed—that when I spoke of its having been understood that today would be a day on which we should have a discussion on the question of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in reference to Egypt, I spoke of an engagement entered into, first of all in this House, by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was perfectly well understood when we were discussing the course of Business on Thursday. If the debate had not gone on yesterday, of course matters would have been different; but it was clearly understood that these four Votes would not be taken late on Thursday evening, but might be conveniently taken on Saturday morning. That is the understanding to which I referred, and if anybody characterizes that as an arrangement otherwise than a perfectly straightforward one, I shall be glad to hear what he has to say. The observations of the Secretary of State for the Home Department were observations which gave pain to those who heard them on this side of the House; but it is clear that the accusation which they conveyed is an accusation altogether untenable.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) has alluded to an understanding to which I was a party on Thursday evening. That understanding I will describe literally. It was that we should endeavour to get through the Votes in Supply that night, except five; and that, failing to get these five on Friday, we should devote to their discussion Saturday morning. The suggestion was never made that Saturday should be given up to a Motion which, practically, amounts to a Vote of Want of Confidence.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I want to say a word or two of explanation in consequence of a phrase used by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote). He has, I am sure, spoken with the courtesy which always characterizes him, and he has said that the words I used have given pain to himself and hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House. Now, however much we may enter into conflict in political contests, I wish to state that that was not my intention; and I regret that my language, which I certainly thought was private, reached the ears of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that it has been regarded by them as offensive. I am sorry that they should have so considered it, and I would venture to withdraw it.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: In order that there may be no mistake as to what was arranged between the Representative of the Government, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Opposition, I may say that it was arranged on Thursday night that the discussion on General Gordon's Vote and the Soudan expenses in Khartoum and Suakin should be taken at 12 o'clock on Saturday. Last night the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was asked, at the hour of 10.30, if that arrangement held good; and the right hon. Gentleman certainly said that if the House did not get into Committee before 11 o'clock that arrangement would hold good. I want to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that that arrangement must have been within the knowledge of the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) when he stated that no such arrangement had been entered into; or else that the noble Marquess, although the responsible Leader of the House, is in the habit of allowing his Colleagues to conclude arrangements to which he is not a party. Further, I wish to say that it is not the Opposition who have prevented the Government from getting into Supply; but my own impression, and I believe that of every other Member of the House, is, that the discussion would be taken on going into Supply.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am bound to remind the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock and the House that the Question before the House is that I do now leave the Chair; and the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) is in possession of the House. Before the hon. Member for Mallow rose, the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) rose to a point of Order, and that point of Order has been decided. It is not in Order to continue the discussion. The Question is, that I do now leave the Chair.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I only wished, Sir, to make a statement in the nature of a personal explanation, which the House is usually kind enough to allow. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Mr. Speaker will tell me if I am out of Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the noble Lord wishes to make a personal explanation, by the indulgence of the House he will be permitted to do so.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I merely wished to explain that there had been an arrangement that the discussion should take place to-day. The noble Marquess gave a flat contradiction to that. I think that, under these circumstances, I have a right to make a personal explanation as to what the arrangement was, and to point out——

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord is exceeding the limits of a personal explanation. I call upon Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I failed to hear that there was any decision on the point of Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The point of Order was settled when I called upon Mr. O'Brien.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I failed, Sir, to hear your decision on the point of Order.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — CAPTAIN PLUNKETT, CORK DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. O'BRIEN, who had the following Motion on the Paper, which he was prevented from moving by the Forms of the House:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, Captain Plunkett, Special Divisional Magistrate of the Cork District, by repeated and unconstitutional invasions of the right of public meeting, and by the imposition of arbitrary and unjust burdens on the people, has abused his authority and created wide-spread discontent and ill-will, and that, in the interests of good government and of respect for the administration of the Law, it is expedient that he be dismissed from his office,"

said, he was sorry to be obliged to turn the attention of the House from the exciting and burning regions of the Soudan to a no less interesting part of Her Majesty's Dominions, called Ireland. The Resolution which he had intended to move was put on the Paper with the object of drawing the attention of Parliament to the conduct of one of the Special Magistrates in Ireland—Captain Plunkett—and he wished to do so because he thought he could show that Captain Plunkett's office was an unnecessary and a vicious one, and that, while he was supposed to be preserving the public peace, he was, in reality, a common disturber of the peace, and a scourge to one of the most peaceful districts in the whole of Ireland. The whole of the County and City of Cork was included in Captain Plunkett's district; and, perhaps, before he proceeded further, it would be well to show what was the condition of the district that this man was treating as if it were a hotbed of crime, and in a state of smouldering insurrection. During the past six months, while Captain Plunkett's reign of terror had full swing, besides threatening letters—which, of course, were of no importance as showing the condition of a place when not followed by crime, and which they all received, and sometimes had to pay the postage on—besides threatening letters, there were in the East Riding of the County Cork in August last only two outrages, and one in the West Riding; in September, five in the East Riding, and two in the West; in October, two in the East Riding, and two in the West; in November, one in the East Riding, and none in the West; in December, one in the East Riding, and again a virgin record in the West; and in January, one in the East Riding, and two in the West. The only serious case reported during the time was the manslaughter of an unfortunate man named Spence. That occurrence, however, was altogether of a non-agrarian character, Spence's death having arisen out of a family dispute; and yet the Chief Secretary was not ashamed to quote the other day this case as justifying the suppression of the right of public meeting in the district for 15 miles around. In the entire of that six months, in a district of 500,000 inhabitants, no single murder took place—not a single case of manslaughter, robbery of arms, or any other offence of such a nature occurred, the only outrages perpetrated being the outrages perpetrated by Captain Plunkett himself, in order that a condition of things would be produced which would keep Dublin Castle alive to the necessity there was of retaining him and his expensive establishment. Now, he would like to ask any intelligent English Member—if they wished to know anything of this subject, which, of course, they did not—what would English people do if in a district equally free from crime a semi-military Governor was planted, and if he had the right virtually to proclaim a state of siege, and to bayonet and bludgeon any persons who dared to assemble in public meeting to discuss his proceedings? That was exactly what Captain Plunkett was doing for the last six months, and doing with the connivance and the apologetic ingenuity of the Chief Secretary. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Deasy) was living for a time under Captain Plunkett's rule, and was, he believed, on a few occasions in rather unpleasant proximity of being bayonetted. He dared say the hon. Member would tell himself what sort of a man Captain Plunkett was. There in Cork he had his head-quarters; and his place there, he believed, swarmed with detectives and villainous-looking hangers on. He had his staff and his armed escort and his parades, until the unfortunate men were worked off their legs. At night the city was patrolled by immense bodies of armed men, as if there was a danger of some attack or revolt. Now, he would venture to say that Captain Plunkett was not able to establish a shadow of justification for all these extraordinary proceedings. He made one attempt, by means of Star Chamber inquiry, to prove that a murder conspiracy existed in Cork; and notwithstanding all his threats and intimidation he failed utterly to prove anything of the kind. One agent of the dynamite conspiracy attempted to establish a footing in Cork—as he supposed they attempted to do in every city in the Three Kingdoms; but Captain Plunkett's infamous attempt to connect the Nationalists of Cork with these proceedings utterly broke down; and he did not give up the attempt until four of the most respectable men in Cork, some of whom the House might have an opportunity of seeing for themselves, owing to Captain Plunkett's proceedings, not until four respectable men were made prisoners, week after week, because they refused to submit to the indignity of being cross-hackled at these secret inquiries, just as if they were participators in abominable crimes. Having failed to show any grounds for the measures he adopted by proving that a murder conspiracy existed in Cork, Captain Plunkett deliberately attempted to create a murder conspiracy and suppressing the right of public meeting by putting down public opinion. Every meeting proposed to be held by the National League in Cork was suppressed, and suppressed in many cases with violence; and not only were they suppressed, but invariably their proclamation was delayed until the very eve of the meeting, in order, no doubt, that the people might fall into the trap that Captain Plunkett had prepared for them. He charged now that these proclamations were wickedly and deliberately delayed by the instrumentality of Captain Plunkett, in the hope that the people might be tempted and exasperated into doing something that would justify Captain Plunkett's office; and he charged, furthermore, that the proclamations were enforced with a violence on the part of the police, and an insolence on the part of the magistrates in charge, deliberately calculated to create riot and disturbance in order, as he had already said, that Captain Plunkett might be able to hold power a little longer. Having described at length the proceedings at the suppressed meetings at Inniscarra and Ovens, the hon. Member proceeded to call attention to the treatment of the Conna and Tallow band at Castlelyons meeting. The proclamation of the Castlelyons meeting was delayed to the night before the people of Tallow and Conna, 12 miles off, could know nothing about the suppression of it; and yet without any notice this band, immediately on its arrival, was set upon with fixed bayonets by the police and chased over the country. Contrast that treatment with the deference and tenderness of Captain M'Ternan at Rosslea, to Lord Rossmore and his Orangemen, who, instead of coming to a peaceful meeting, came as a body of armed men determined to create riot and do murder. If the Tallow men happened to be Orangemen, or if they had arms in their hands to defend themselves, perhaps Captain Plunkett and his police would not be quite so free with their bayonets that day. The Chief Secretary gave an excuse for the suppression of that meeting. He said that the parish priest had been lately evicted from his house, and that public feeling was very much excited. He (Mr. O'Brien) should say it was a nice way Captain Plunkett had of allaying that excitement. Having referred to the meetings at Lissarda, Donoughmore, and Aughabollogue, the hon. Member proceeded to speak of the suppression of the meeting at Killavullen, which he said was a good illustration of the force, and fraud, and mixed system of lying and tyranny which characterized Captain Plunkett's proceedings. Captain Plunkett's favourite device—an old device with tyrants—for putting down disturbance which he himself had created, was the quartering of the police on the people, and the levying of enormous imposts. Captain Plunkett first attempted this system in Cork; but he believed he was sorry now that he did so, for in the Cork Town Council Whig Knights and Deputy Lieutenants—men who were indebted to Dublin Castle for most of the glory they enjoyed in this world—joined with the Nationalists in protesting against this tax, and refused to present for it, as Captain Plunkett, in order to justify the continuance in districts of large police forces, in order, too, to justify his own continuance in his salary, attempted everywhere he went to foment disorder. He tried that system in Kerry, but had to drop it, and he was now practising on Monanimy. There Captain Plunkett had imposed a tax of £500 a-year to pay for the protection of a ruffian named Hallissey, whom he found to be a serviceable instrument in his operations. When he took the liberty, last year, of exposing and denouncing Hallissey, the Chief Secretary defended the man; and, of course, the English House of Commons regarded the fellow as an injured, innocent victim of some frightful conspiracy. What had turned out since? Captain Plunkett had been told to his teeth by one of the local magistrates (Mr. Hickey) that Hallissey's story about his being fired at was a fabrication. And did Captain Plunkett venture to deny it? On the contrary, he was reported in the Cork papers, and though Captain Plunkett might now find it convenient to deny that report—he was informed that it was supplied by an official shorthand writer brought down by Captain Plunkett himself—he was reported to have said that the police were originally placed on the district on account of the "Boycotting," the "Boycotting" consisting, according to Captain Plunkett himself, in a few people in the district refusing to deal with Hallissey. It came to this, therefore—that the district was now paying £500 a-year for a ruffian who ought to be put in the dock for perjury. But Captain Plunkett could not long do these things in Cork if he had not an apologist in that House to put a nice aspect upon things which, when seen in their colour, were ugly and hideous. The hon. Member then referred to the suppression of the Killavullen meeting, County Cork, and to the incidents which took place on the spot. The police struck the people with the butts of their guns, and two women sustained severe injuries, one of them having a rib broken. In regard to these proceedings he had put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and his reply was that Mr. O'Connor had not been assaulted; that the police had not been assaulted; that the police did not charge; and that there was no crowd there to be charged. He had received numerous letters from persons who were present on the occasion characterizing the statement of the right hon. Gentleman in terms which he wished he could quote; but they were more natural than Parliamentary. The right hon. Gentleman, however, seemed invariably to act upon the belief that the statement of one police official was worth dozens of statements from priests and laymen. He quoted at length from statements of Mr. John O'Connor and others in support of the charges he had advanced against the police. All this was dismissed by the right hon. Gentleman with the cool statement to that House that the police never charged the people. He did not believe there was a race of slaves who would not rebel against treatment of that sort. Here were people loaded under false pretences with this tax, and when they attempted to make any public protest against it, they were assaulted at their own doors, even in their own houses, by the police with the butt ends of rifles; and after all this an English Minister told the English House of Commons that the people were never attacked; that they were not there to be attacked; and that the whole thing was an hallucination; and that Captain Plunkett and his policemen could do no wrong. These things the Government had the power to do in Ireland; and he supposed they would go on doing them until some hour of weakness or disaster taught them better sense. He and his Friends had no hope whatever that the House of Commons would be moved by any exposure of Captain Plunkett's tyranny and mendacity. He expected in a few minutes to hear the right hon. Gentleman shielding and defending Captain Plunkett as before. The Irish people had only themselves to look to. Thank God, they had taken this matter into their own hands, and had refused, in Cork, Limerick, Loughrea, and Monanimy, to pay a penny of this police tax. He hoped sincerely they would continue refusing to pay a penny of it until it was wrung from them at the point of the bayonet. He only referred to the subject here because it was well to saddle Englishmen with the knowledge of what was going on in Ireland. Now, at all events, the few Englishmen who were present knew how Captain Plunkett was oppressing and belying as peaceable a district as could be found in the world. If there was to be no redress here, and if the result that night should be like the result on every previous night when they complained of the conduct of officials in Ireland, all he could say was the English people must be very unreasonable if they did not understand why the minds of the Irish were filled with hatred and resentment to England. He verily believed Irishmen would welcome the Mahdi or the Grand Turk if he came to deliver them from English rule. He could not move the Motion standing in his name; but he would divide the House on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair as a protest.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that the hon. Member for Mallow had made a very strong attack upon a public servant, one of the officers employed by the Irish Government. He thought the hon. Member for Mallow would have mitigated his language, or directed it elsewhere, if he had known that the main charges he had pressed against Captain Plunkett ought to have been addressed to the Irish Government. He had differed from Captain Plunkett in certain small matters, none of which had been brought forward to-day. It was impossible that one should always agree with every recommendation that Captain Plunkett made, and on one occasion he had not quite agreed with certain proceedings which that gentleman thought right to take. But, considering the enormous number of decisions that Captain Plunkett had had to make, and the circumstances under which he had had to make them, he knew of no public servant whom the Irish Government thought more fit for the sort of work he had had to do, and he knew of no public servant who had been more severely tried, and, on the whole, had been more successful. He desired to take upon himself and Lord Spencer the full burden of all the criticisms made upon Captain Plunkett by the hon. Member for Mallow; because all those criticisms had been directed against actions of Captain Plunkett, which had been always enjoined upon him by the Irish Government, and had always been approved of subsequently by them. The hon. Member for Mallow did not generalize in his charges. He was extremely specific. He was very glad to think that in the County Cork generally crime was very much reduced. But that would not be the point of his observations to-day; because the charges of the hon. Member would be found to refer, not to the County Cork in general, but to certain very limited districts, and with regard to those districts he could not endorse the statement of the hon. Member that they were not in a serious condition. Seven meetings had been stopped in County Cork since Parliament separated last year. No doubt seven meetings was a very large number to stop in a single county; but on examination they would find that five were in the immediate vicinity of the police district of Ballincollig. Thus they were dealing with a particular district in which one meeting had been stopped. The promoters of these meetings were not satisfied with the decision of the Government, but announced meeting after meeting; so that the action of the Government resolved itself into having stopped meetings in this particular district.

Mr. HEALY: No; Conna is 60 miles from Ballincollig.

Mr. BIGGAR: Irish geography!

Mr. TREVELYAN held that, in any case, the district of Ballincollig was in an extremely critical state. First, there had been a most terrible murder there. The hon. Member described it as a manslaughter; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) thought he had never heard a more complete misnomer. A man was done to death by a violent mob on account of an agrarian dispute. It was very much more serious as regarded the general peace of the district, than if he had been killed by two or three men in a lonely lane. It was sad that an immense number of people witnessed this brutal murder; and the description of the attitude which was shown by the apathy or sympathy of those persons clearly rendered it necessary for Captain Plunkett to take most careful measures in order to preserve the peace of the district. There were two incendiary fires, four threatening letters, and one other very serious case—the case of a band of armed Moonlighters who stopped a man named Connell, whom they mistook for a man named M'Carthy, who had taken an evicted farm. This was a very large party, indeed, of armed men, and there was every reason to believe that this agrarian dispute might result in more outrage.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked when that outrage was committed?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Within the last six months.

Mr. KENNY: Is it reported?

MR. TREVELYAN said, it was reported in the Reports of the Government officials. The first of the meetings to which the hon. Member had referred was at Inniscarra. It was stopped on account of the District Inspector believing that outrages would follow, and that a man named M'Carthy, who had taken an evicted farm, would be injured. A man was going to Cork on October 4, when two men jumped over a wall and asked him if he were anything to M'Carthy. He said "No," and was allowed to pass; but he saw about 50 men behind the wall, some of them armed. The authorities believed if M'Carthy had been present at the moment he would have met his death. Under these circumstances, the authorities stopped the first meeting, and all good citizens ought to have refrained from attempting to hold violent meetings in the same district. Then came the meeting at Crookstown. In that case some evictions had taken place, and others were about to follow. That might be said to be an insufficient reason for stopping meetings; but if outrages followed from the taking of farms from which others had been evicted, he thought that the fact of evictions being about to occur in the neighbourhood was a fair reason for stopping the meetings which were about to be held.

MR. HEALY: Why not stop the evictions?

MR. TREVELYAN: What does that mean? It means that you will tell the landlords of the country that they are not to exact rent for their own property; and hon. Members can hardly believe that any Government in a civilized country can, in order to avoid the risk of breaking the peace, consent that the ordinary obligations of citizens should not be fulfilled. In the case of Castlelyons, the Rev. Mr. Ferriss, the parish priest, had been evicted for non-payment of three years' rent, and on that occasion the people for miles around had been greatly excited. The rev. gentleman made a very violent speech, and after the eviction the mob rushed into the house and damaged property to the extent of £400. He wished to ask why places of this kind were chosen for the holding of National League meetings? There were hundreds of other villages and towns in Cork where such meetings could have been held, and where the Government would be very willing to see them held. Why was it necessary to go where another eviction had taken place, where a parish priest had been evicted under very exciting circumstances, and where the burning question of Hallissey was in progress? The object of hon. Members opposite was to spread their political opinions, and a very legitimate and honourable object it was; but why choose for that purpose those places where the Government, rightly or wrongly, thought meetings should not be held? He thought that those who had thrust the unfortunate people on the point of the bayonet, according to the expression which had been used, were those who had insisted upon holding a meeting where there was obvious danger of life; whereas, if it had been held 30 miles off, it would have been exactly the same political fact, and would not have risked the same danger of a collision between the people and the police. [Reverting to the Castlelyons meeting, the right hon. Gentleman read a portion of the speech of Father Ferriss, which was loudly applauded by the Irish Members.] Resuming, he said, the remainder of this violent speech was of the same character as that which hon. Members opposite cheered so loudly, and would produce the same effect upon the minds of English Members. The hon. Member asked what would the English people say if an English incumbent had been treated like the Rev. Mr. Ferriss? His answer was that if the English incumbent owed his landlord three years' rent, and if because the landlord demanded what was his due the incumbent denounced him as a land thief and a robber, then he would say that the sympathies of the English people would be with the man who was asking for the natural produce of his property, and not with the man who was trying to hold that property without paying a farthing for it. [Mr. WHITWORTH: Hear, hear!] Unfortunately, in this case, the sympathy went the other way, and the result of the violent speech he had just read to the House was that property to the extent of £400 was damaged. There were a good many Members who had remained in the House to hear him who had heard the speech of the hon. Member for Mallow; and he would ask them whether they did not think that if the hon. Member were to go down and make the speech which he had made that day, and in the same tone, there would be a danger of the peace of the district being disturbed? [Mr. WHITWORTH: Hear, hear!] He now came to the case of Hallissey, which rested on a different basis, and for which the hon. Member for Mallow always reserved his choicest and most formidable epithets. Hallissey was a blacksmith, earning 35*s.* a-week. He became unpopular because he worked for a farmer named Carton, who had been "Boycotted." "Boycotting" notices had been posted up, and Hallissey's trade went from him; several people who tried to employ him having had their property destroyed. He and his family had become quite destitute, and had received assistance from Government. This state of things had continued until August, 1882, when it had been endeavoured to counteract "Boycotting" by proclaiming the district under the Prevention of Crime Act, and sending police at the expense of the locality. Soon after this Hallissey reported that he was fired at with a revolver, and at the magisterial investigation Mr. Hickey, J.P., stated that he disbelieved the story. It was said Captain Plunkett concurred in that view; but Captain Plunkett's remarks had reference to no doubt of his own as to the truth of Hallissey's statement, but as to the doubt expressed by Mr. Hickey in believing Hallissey's story, and in that view he was supported by two other magistrates, Messrs. Longan and Butler, who were of opinion that the man had been fired at. The right hon. Gentleman then referred to the proposal of a subscription to emigrate Hallissey, which was originated, he said, by the District Inspector, and supported by the parish priest, Father Ahern. He could imagine nothing in which a parish priest who really loved his people could more willingly engage in than thus assisting an innocent man.

MR. BIGGAR: Oh, oh!

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member for Cavan interrupts me. What charge has the hon. Member for Cavan against him?

MR. BIGGAR: A charge of perjury and fraud.

MR. TREVELYAN: It was not because of perjury or fraud he was "Boycotted." He was "Boycotted" because he worked for a "Boycotted" farmer. [Mr. WHITWORTH: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member for Cavan has given no grounds for stating that the man is not an innocent man.

MR. O'BRIEN: If I might be permitted to interrupt, I would reply by saying that the right hon. Gentleman himself used these words—"Whatever doubt there may be about Hallissey being fired at." Now, why should there be a doubt if he was an innocent man?

MR. BIGGAR: The right hon. Gentleman says that Hallissey is an innocent man. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that a man who is guilty of perjury and fraud is an innocent man?

MR. TREVELYAN: I say that it was not proved in any sense that Hallissey was guilty of perjury and fraud. Out of the three magistrates who were present at his examination, one did not believe it, and two did. That was not a state of things on which he could be charged with perjury and fraud. [Mr. WHITWORTH: Hear, hear!] He regretted very much that the subscription for Hallissey was not successful. [*Ironical Irish cheers.*] It was much to be regretted that hon. Members took up the case in that House in the spirit in which they did. He thought it might be the case that, owing to the way the question was made a ground of battle in that House, the benevolent object he had referred to fell through. [*Irish cheers.*] He was very sorry for that; because he thought it would be a good thing if the man had been emigrated, and the district might well have made some amends to him for the loss he had sustained as an honest tradesman. Subsequently a Memorial was again sent to His Excellency by certain inhabitants of the district, with Father Ahern at their head, praying to be relieved from the tax, and expressing their abhorrence of crime.

MR. O'BRIEN: How many?

MR. TREVELYAN: Fourteen. I am sorry that not more than 14 people in the district could be got to express abhorrence of crime.

MR. HEALY: How many of the 14 repudiated their signatures afterwards?

MR. TREVELYAN: If they did so it was under the influence of intimidation. The Lord Lieutenant would much rather foster a feeling of abhorrence against crime than run the risk of checking it by the imposition of an unpopular tax. That was the policy of His Excellency, and he acted under the advice of Captain Plunkett. It should, however, be borne in mind that both His Excellency and Captain Plunkett were carrying out a statute passed by Parliament, and they were bound to put it into practice where necessary. He could not see, looking at the figures he had quoted, that Captain Plunkett could be said to have recommended His Excellency in the direction of severity in the matter. As regarded stopping meetings, he could not find that Captain Plunkett had recommended any meeting to be stopped, except in the single district of Ballincollig, where some circumstances had occurred which rendered such a step advisable. In one district a meeting had been stopped on account of outrages in another district; one had been stopped on account of the violent speech delivered by a Catholic clergyman. In another a meeting had been stopped on account of proceedings with regard to Hallissey. It was no cruelty to prevent a meeting being held in a place where a murder had been committed. He deeply regretted that in their anxiety to challenge the Government, the National Party should assert that the Government put down free speech. He also regretted that the promoters of these meetings insisted over and over again in trying to hold meetings in such districts as these. He was sure that it was impossible to persuade the Irish people that the Government wished to put down freedom of speech—[Mr. BIGGAR: Oh!] The hon. Member for Cavan alleged that they did put down freedom of speech. He would like to read some extracts from the speeches of the hon. Member for Cavan about Earl Spencer and himself, and then ask whether Ireland was a country in which there was not speech the very freest of the free? The most extreme and violent speeches had been made in Ireland——

MR. O'BRIEN: At our own risk.

MR. TREVELYAN: Freedom of speech has not been stopped in Ireland.

MR. HEALY: Then what did I get six months in gaol for?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he was not speaking of that period. If in some limited districts freedom of speech had been stopped, that was not because it might produce possible annoyance to men in high station, but because it might lead to crime and outrage against humble residents in the neighbourhood. Those districts had now become very few; but as long as such districts were there, the Government would continue to pursue the same policy. With regard to the charges which had been brought against Captain Plunkett, he thought the hon. Member very willing to strike a blow at Captain Plunkett and likewise against the Irish Government. [Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] He (Mr. Trevelyan) held that the fact of being engaged in a very powerful political movement might have the effect of distorting a man's judgment; but he believed that the great body of the people of the country, and a large number of people in Ireland, would believe that he had not exceeded his duty. In conclusion, he believed he had vindicated the conduct of the Irish Executive, and answered all the charges made against it.

MR. SEXTON said, that the sentiments of the Chief Secretary with regard to freedom of speech in Ireland reminded him of the utterances of another distinguished Englishman, Oliver Cromwell. That individual had once said—"You may have freedom of worship, but while I live you shall not perform the Mass." The right hon. Gentleman boasted that he allowed freedom of speech; but they all knew, from personal experience, that when they said anything unpalatable in flavour to the Government, freedom of speech was only in the perception of Dublin Castle. He asked them to look at the condition of the Tory Benches, which were deserted by all except the indefatigable hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). The Tory Party, having driven and deluded the Government into the adoption of this miserable coercion policy towards Ireland, now left them to defend themselves as best they could. [*Cheers.*] He heard a mocking cheer from the hon. Member for Drogheda (Mr. Whitworth); but, recognizing the meaning and animus which prompted that cheer, he would proceed no further than to say that the intelligence of the Irish people would enable them to recognize what they got from those Representatives who joined the English ruling

Party. He was glad to observe that the hon. Member was about to transfer his affections from the uncongenial scene of Drogheda to the more congenial region of Marylebone. The people of Ireland would be able to form a conception from the course of the debate of the method of Government in steering an "even keel" in Ireland. Had the people of Cork been accorded by Captain Plunkett the polite and exquisite treatment which had been extended by Captain M'Ternan to Lord Rossmore, when he endeavoured to violate the public peace and provoke civil war? They remembered the fact that Major Robert Hamilton, who had signed a murderous placard, urging an attack upon a peaceable meeting in Ulster, had endeavoured to break through an armed force of the Crown. Not only was no attempt made to repel him and his party at the point of the bayonet, as was done in Cork, but he was treated with civility and courtesy, and the next day he was permitted to go upon the Bench of Justice and denounce a servant of the Queen for having caused the death of the Orangeman Giffen. The debate upon the question of the conduct of Captain Plunkett had, from the facts disclosed, proved the evil of appointing such a class of persons who, having received a large salary, high dignity, and extensive power, then endeavoured to create disturbance, in order to show that there was a necessity that they should be retained in their position. He observed with pleasure the presence during the debate of the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone). They all knew that to the keen perception of the hon. Gentleman they owed the declaration of his belief that the Government existing in Ireland was the worst in Europe. He believed that the hon. Gentleman's knowledge of Ireland was much less than that of the Chief Secretary, but he believed that his frankness was much greater; and he hoped that the knowledge he had gained would have an influence upon future English policy. The whole system pursued by Captain Plunkett had been sinister. Its aim and its real objects were apparent. He had conducted a secret inquiry at Cork into the landing of dynamite agents at Queenstown; and he had endeavoured to implicate persons of the highest standing and respectability—men whose public life was well known, and who were as far removed from such transactions as Hell was removed from Heaven. Men of the most blameless character had been summoned and examined and cross-hackled by Captain Plunkett, who showed by his conduct that he desired to continue in his employment by disturbing the public peace within his district. Such men as John O'Connor, of Cork, so far from tending by their presence to crime and disorder, possessed the confidence of the people, and inspired them with a sense of tranquillity. It appeared from the arguments of the Chief Secretary that because a crowd had assembled on one occasion at a certain place, and because two men jumped across a hedge at another, these localities were to be regarded as dangerous ever afterwards. Why did the Irish people wish to give expression to their opinions? It was because they wished to ask for what had been promised by the Solicitor General for Ireland to his electors at Derry. He asked the right hon. Gentleman, if he was a leaseholder himself, would he not desire to be placed under the Land Act? And if he was not a leaseholder, he had a right to complain if he was required to pay rent upon his own improvements under the present law. The reason why the Rev. Mr. Ferriss was unable to pay his three years' rent was because it was excessive; and the Chief Secretary had passed over the case very lightly, because he knew so little of the difference between the condition of the oppressed Irish priest and the prosperous English incumbent. It appeared to him that the Government were willing to allow meetings in districts where they knew there was no particular reason why they should be held; but in districts where they were aware that the people had some grievance to complain of they prevented them. The Chief Secretary had passed by the infamous method by which the meetings were suppressed, and he alleged that Captain Plunkett had acted upon the spur of the moment. But why did he postpone the announcement of the suppression of a meeting until the very morning on which it was to be held, and then disperse the people with an armed force? Why did he keep his mind to himself for a fortnight or three weeks, and then after dark, on the night before the meeting, send round a policeman with the "omnipotent paste pot"? Clearly because he desired to give the people, if they had no one to advise or restrain them, what Napoleon called a whiff of grape-shot, and because he wished to administer to them brute force instead of law. All this was with the object of endeavouring to demonstrate the necessity for his continuing longer in Office. He would deal with the case of Hallissey in a few words. The Chief Secretary had, with the literary skill with which he was endowed, before he entered the House, in other walks of life, which, perhaps, for his own reputation, he would have done better to have confined himself——[Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!]—he had drawn a most pathetic picture of the blacksmith Hallissey's pitiable condition. Well, that worthy, he might inform the House, was one of these ill-conditioned persons of evil character and repute who were to be found in almost every community. For years before he had been "Boycotted" he was in the receipt of outdoor relief; but in times of suspicion and coercion this creature, who they had been told had been "Boycotted" and ruined, thought he could obain a more desirable occupation than beating an anvil all his life. He saw the sums of money paid to informers, who were then high in the market. He had then fabricated the story which two magistrates declared themselves convinced was a falsehood, and in which declaration even Captain Plunkett himself was obliged to concur. The result of his fraudulent scheme of perjury was that an oppressive burden of £500 per annum, in the shape of a police tax, was imposed upon the people, who were then advised to subscribe £50 or £60 in order to transport him to happier climes. No doubt the country could well afford to dispense with him; but he would ask the Government were there not many steam-packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons at their disposal? Hallissey was now a very distinguished person; and could not the Government, who could give £50,000 to the Tuke Emigration Committee to ship away people who were valuable to the country at £5 a-head, send him off in one of these packets? He might as well, however, frankly tell the Government that Hallissey would wait till his hair grew gray, and till the palsy of old age came upon his limbs, and until he occupied six feet of Irish ground, before the poor people of Monanimy would subscribe this money in order to satisfy the arrogance and despotism of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. DEASY said, he would not have intervened in this debate but for the disingenuous way in which the Chief Secretary had met the charges of the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). He wished to reply to his defence, for the reason that he was one of those who had been favoured with considerable attention from Captain Plunkett, both in the County and City of Cork. He was well aware of many little acts of which probably the Chief Secretary had never heard. He was surprised that one of the most important points brought forward by the hon. Member for Mallow, the tax for the extra police force, had not been met, or attempted to be met, by the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the reason for the suppression of the meeting at Castleisland was because the parish priest made a violent speech on being evicted. He (Mr. Deasy) was sorry the right hon. Gentleman did not read that speech in full; because he thought it was an able and clear exposition of the state of things in Ireland, and a speech every Member sitting on the Irish Benches would endorse, and which would be endorsed throughout the length and breadth of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that, if the parish priest of Killavullen was evicted for non-payment of rent, there were evictions also convenient to where they were at present, in the county of Kent, for the non-payment of tithes, and violent meetings were held there, but the Government did not interfere with or suppress them. As to Hallissey, there could be no doubt at all that he succeeded in obtaining a sum of money from the Government by pretending to be "Boycotted." As for the meeting at Inniscarra, it was miles away from Coachford, the scene of the murder, which the right hon. Gentleman alleged to have taken place in the neighbourhood. Mr. Justice Johnson, who tried the case, declared emphatically, in his opening Charge to the Grand Jury, that there was nothing of an agrarian character in it, and that it had no connection whatever with the present or past agitation in the country. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was disposed to believe Mr. Justice Johnson or Captain Plunkett. Evidently Captain Plunkett was the favoured one. As to the meeting at "The Ovens," which was also suppressed, he did not believe that there was a quieter district in all Ireland, or a more peaceful district in England, than "The Ovens." But on that day Captain Plunkett had his men posted at every cross road and lane in the parish, who prevented any three men coming together for any purpose; and what was the result? It was the custom with the farmers of the surrounding country to meet the labourers every Sunday after Mass, and engage them for the coming week; but, owing to the tactics of Captain Plunkett, the poor labourers of the neighbourhood were not able to get work, because they were not allowed to go to the men who would employ them. The right hon. Gentleman did not assign any reason for suppressing the Donoughmore meeting at all. It was 13 or 14 miles from the scene of any outrage, and for the last 10 or 15 years there had been no outrage committed in that part of the country. The meeting was to have been held for the purpose of establishing a branch of the National League, and the National League had not the effect of producing outrages, but had the contrary effect. In proof of this, he would mention that previous to the suppression of the Land League one of the most flourishing branches was in Donoughmore. The right hon. Gentleman also said that an attack was made on a man named Connell in some other part of the county of Cork within the last six months. If such an attack took place, nobody ever heard of it except the Irish Government and Captain Plunkett. He would not dwell any further on these meetings, except to say that he was present at most of them himself. He was present at Donoughmore, and he could not step from one side of the road to the other without being followed by three or four policemen, or go into the house of a friend without its being taken possession of by four or five policemen; and the people who went to the house with him were carefully noted by the police. During his canvass of the City of Cork, he was followed by the police from meeting to meeting. They took notes of the observations which fell from him; and at his meeting every night in the City of Cork, the crowds were mixed with a large number of detectives, who probably took notes of his speeches and also those of his supporters. Was that the way in which they treated his opponents? Violent meetings were held in the Protestant Hall, at which people were incited to murder and violence by gentlemen holding high positions in the City—by magistrates and Deputy Lieutenants. Two evenings before the election took place, a gentleman, the Master of an Orange Lodge in the City and County of Cork, Captain Sarsfield, made a violent speech; and what was the result? That within two hours a Catholic church was wrecked in the city. Now, he asked, where were the Government note-takers from that meeting; and he asked, furthermore, where were the extra police who ought to have been on duty, and ought to have prevented the perpetration of that sacrilegious act? The scene of the outrage was within a few hundred yards of a police barrack; it was visited next morning by the police authorities and a number of magistrates; but no one was made amenable. There was, however, a strong belief in Cork that not only the police, but that the authorities, were aware of the names of those engaged in the commission of the crime. There was no secret inquiry held as to who did it; and it would take all the eloquence of the Irish Government to persuade a single man in the City of Cork that Captain Plunkett could not name the gentlemen who were concerned in the perpetration of this sacrilege. It was an evening on which they had a great deal of rain, and there was a great deal of mud about the chapel which was wrecked; and it would have been very easy for the police to have traced the parties who committed the deed to their mansions in the vicinity of that church; but they took care not to do so. They appeared, however, to have given them private information that they would be proceeded against sooner or later; and the result was that certain young gentlemen of high position had left the city in a day or two after. Many other instances of this sort he could bring before the House; but he would not do so, because the charges made by his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow had not been met at all. But he would refer to the tax for extra police, amounting to £15,000, which had been levied on the citizens of Cork. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary explained, at the end of last Session, that the Government had placed extra police there because the Corporation of Cork had requested the Lord Lieutenant to permit them to remain, on the ground that it was necessary for the peace of the city. No sooner did this announcement appear in the Cork Press than an indignation meeting of the Corporation of Cork was held, and a Resolution was moved by Mr. Lane stating that such was not the fact; that the only application that was ever made by the Town Council was an application to remove the police force, or that if they were not removed that the cost of their maintenance should be defrayed out of the Imperial Exchequer. Immediately after that a presentment was made to the Corporation for £465 4*s.* 10*d.* Mr. Lane moved the rejection of the vote as the most emphatic denial the Council could give to the statement of the Chief Secretary in the House of Commons. He was seconded by the present High Sheriff of Cork and ex-Mayor of the city, and by a gentleman who, he should say, had often made the acquaintance of the right hon. Gentleman, because he was a constant attendant at Dublin Castle, Sir George Penrose, J.P. He said that for 13 years the Corporation objected to the imposition of the tax for extra police, and years ago they brought the matter before Parliament; but they were unsuccessful. Mr. Harris, a Conservative member of the Corporation, said he had no doubt if a Conservative Government were in power the burden would be removed. One thing was certain as the result of the action of the present Government, and that was that what was regarded as one of the most Liberal and Whig cities in Ireland did not possess a gentleman of that political persuasion at all. The present Mayor said, in his speech during the discussion, that from his extensive knowledge of the city he did not think there was the slightest necessity for the police force. They should resist the payment of this tax the best way they could; and if it was to be paid, it should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. They were not required, and the fact should be strongly placed before the Government. He was followed by Mr. Kennedy, J.P., who spoke in the same strain. The only crimes committed in Cork which would justify the presence of this extra police force were committed by the police themselves. The most serious charge he had to bring against them was the murder of a tramp by two detectives. A sort of mock trial was gone through, at which Sub-Inspector Newell, Sub-Inspector of jury-packing fame, was prosecutor, and they were defended by the ablest solicitor in Cork, with the result that the magistrates refused to grant informations against those detectives. The Crown, it appears, sent up a bill against them to the Grand Jury; but the County and Sub-Inspectors refused to go on with the prosecution, and absolutely declined to give any information as to how the bill found its way to the Grand Jury. This extra police force had been quartered in the city so far back as 1867, and ever since the citizens of Cork had been petitioning the Government to withdraw them. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, who had been again reminded that this police force was a crying grievance in Cork, would take some steps to remove, or, if he would not remove them, would relieve them from the unjust tax they had to pay for their maintenance. If not, and if by this means he hoped they would make the people of Cork loyal, he never made a greater mistake. He did not expect that the right hon. Gentleman would have taken upon himself all the acts of cruelty and injustice perpetrated by the Hon. Captain Plunkett in the City of Cork, and he was rather inclined to think that he had spoken in absolute and utter ignorance of this man's conduct. [Mr. TREVELYAN dissented.] If not, he did not envy his present position. He told them there were hundreds of places in which they might have held Nationalist meetings in Cork if they liked to do so. [Mr. TREVELYAN: In the county of Cork.] As one of the organizers, he must say that he was not aware of that fact; and he believed that if they had attempted to hold meetings anywhere in the county they would have been suppressed, just as they were suppressed in other places. The only meeting they permitted before the opening of Parliament was at Bandon, at which two Members of Parliament attended; but they had their revenge, for the police invaded the hotel and prosecuted every gentleman who entertained the two hon. Members (Mr. T. D. Sullivan and Mr. T. P. O'Connor). He would like the right hon. Gentleman to map out the districts in the county of Cork where meetings could be held; and, if so, he assured him they would endeavour to meet his views in some way. He really did not see that there was very much truth in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. He thought he had been misled in this matter. If not, it augured very badly for the future relations between the English Government and the Irish people.

Mr. PARNELL: Sir, I confess I have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary with a great deal of surprise and a great deal of disappointment. I had hoped that he would have chosen the occasion of the Motion of my hon. Friend to make some favourable announcement, and hold out some prospect with regard to this question of the extra police in Cork, which would have been satisfactory to the suffering citizens of that town.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. PARNELL resumed: The City of Cork, which I have the honour to represent, was distinguished, during the whole of the great agrarian movement which resulted in the passage of the Land Act, by its entire absence from agrarian or political crime of any kind, and that state of affairs has continued to exist up to the present moment. During the last four years, and for a number of years previous, there has been an entire absence of agrarian or political crime of any kind in the City of Cork; and it is a city such as that that the satellites of the Irish Government choose for the practice of deeds which have not been paralleled in any part of Ireland. They have inflicted on the citizens of Cork an extra police tax, which since it was first inflicted amounts to the enormous sum of £15,000. They have held secret inquiries under the Prevention of Crime Act, and they have hauled respectable citizens, entirely innocent of any crime, before the magistrates, and sent them to prison because they were unable to give any information. They have endeavoured to blacken the fame of individual politicians, not because they believed these persons could give them any information about anything, but simply because their general political course had made them obnoxious to magnates such as Captain Plunkett. When at last all parties in Cork united together, and asked that those extra police might be removed, they got a reply from the Chief Secretary which, I do not wish to characterize as shuffling, but which entirely evaded the point put forward, and leaves the subject in a most unsatisfactory state. I wonder that the right hon. Gentleman, when he found that this city, containing a population of 100,000 inhabitants, was perfectly peaceable, and had been perfectly peaceable before he ever came into Office—I wonder that he did not signalize his appointment, and show his appreciation of such a peaceful state of things, by some such act of grace and justice as that asked for on the present occasion, and not only asked for on the present occasion, but asked for persistently ever since the right hon. Gentleman held Office in Ireland. I wonder that he did not tell us that the question would be taken into consideration. But what will be the result, and what has been the result, of the attitude assumed by the Irish Government in this matter? Why, this. The Corporation of Cork, in reference to this matter, have determined that they will not pay the tax, and the Corporation of Limerick have followed their example. Now, does the right hon. Gentleman ever consider what would be the effect of a general strike in Ireland, not against paying rent, but against the payment of this police tax? Has he ever considered whether the difficulty of his administration would not be enormously increased if the ratepayers who are being mulcted, and who have been mulcted for a number of years, for the cost of extra police in the different districts and counties of Ireland were to say—"We will not pay this tax, but we will allow you to collect it." Suppose the example of the City of Cork and the example of the City of Limerick were to be followed generally throughout Ireland, does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell me that he could collect the tax? He could collect the tax perhaps; but it would cost him ten times as much as the tax itself to do so, and he would excite such a state of political feeling in Ireland in the attempt to do so that the right hon. Gentleman would be obliged to admit that the remedy was a great deal worse than the disease. I recollect when the farmers of Ireland were advised not to pay rent. A great many people thought that movement would be successful, and they brought forward to show that the resistance to the tithes in 1832 and 1833. I never thought so myself; but I do believe this—that a resistance of this payment for extra police and for blood-money would be just as successful as the resistance to the tithes in 1832 and 1833. The situation is precisely analogous. Why did the movement against the payment of rent fail? That failed because the tenants and their families could be turned out of their homes; but that was not so with regard to the police tax and the blood tax. The cost also of the collection of this tax, which would fall on the ratepayers, is very insignificant; while the heavy law costs which result from the ejectment and from sales of stock by the Sheriff, in satisfaction for a judgment obtained in the Superior Courts for non-payment of rent, can be inflicted on the tenant who refuses to pay. In view of the attitude that the right hon. Gentleman has exhibited to-night, and has exhibited with regard to the infliction of this tax from the beginning, I give it as my deliberate judgment that the farmers of Ireland are fools to continue to pay this tax any longer. They have the remedy in their own hands; and if they choose to exercise that remedy they will very soon put an end to those crutches that the Irish Government is leaning on in the shape of the levy of taxes for blood-money and extra police. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that we have the utmost freedom of speech in Ireland. I should not care to go to Ireland, I must say, and exercise my right of free speech. I do not believe in the freedom of speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The fruit-growers of Kent are allowed to summon tumultuous meetings, and mob the officers of the law, and collect crowds, and refuse to pay extra tithes. Persons are allowed there to advise, to aid, and abet to incitements against those tithes without any interference from the Executive. These things will not be permitted in Ireland. But a spontaneous movement on the part of the farmers of Ireland against the payment of this unjust tax is perfectly possible, and, in my judgment, would be successful. Now, Sir, we have the utmost freedom of speech in Ireland according to the right hon. Gentleman. Some freedom was afforded, no doubt, to Nationalist speakers last winter for the first time; but would it have been possible for the Government to have set in motion the Prevention of Crime Act against the moderate language of the Irish Nationalists, while at the same time they allowed to pass unnoticed the deliberate and direct incitements to assassination and outrage which the Orange speakers were indulging in? The right hon. Gentleman also told us that we might have held 100 meetings in the county of Cork, and that we would not be interfered with. Now, I doubt whether there are 100 places in the county of Cork in which we could have held meetings; but every district and every portion of the county was tried, and nowhere, except in the town of Bandon, and one in Charleville, would the right hon. Gentleman and Captain Plunkett permit meetings to be held. Well, Sir, we will take the right hon. Gentleman at his word. We will search out every place in the county where it is possible to hold meetings, and we will announce them. We will make up for the lost time, and we will test the sincerity of the right hon. Gentleman by taking him at his word. I confess I think the right hon. Gentleman might have noticed some of the points raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). He might have explained how it was that the notices of the suppression of the meetings in Cork, and throughout Ireland generally, were only sent down at the last moment, and posted in the dead of night, so that the people, coming often from great distances, only knew of the proclamation when they arrived at the place of meeting, and found the platform in possession of large bodies of police and military. I cannot help thinking that with the military soul of such men as Captain Plunkett this method of suppressing meetings suggested itself, in order that they might make a display of armed force before the people, and endeavour to provoke a breach of the peace; and it is very creditable to the people that, notwithstanding the great excuses given by the Government, not the slightest disturbance was attempted by them. And if the people have disappointed the good intentions of those military gentlemen, certainly it was not because of any foresight on the part of the Executive Government. It need hardly be said that the Prevention of Crime Act conferred most extraordinary powers on the Irish Government. It gave powers of summary punishment such as never before were given even to an Irish Government. It gave powers of changing venue; powers with respect to juries and trials by Judges; powers to levy blood taxes and extra police taxes; powers, in fact, that the Irish Government consider sufficient, and more than sufficient, for all purposes. But Captain Plunkett, in a district almost entirely free from crime during the agrarian agitation, did not think these powers sufficient, and so he set his inventive genius to work to discover new powers; and what was the plan he hit upon? It was a plan to intimidate the people of Monanimy into getting up a fund for the emigration of an obnoxious blacksmith named Hallissey. I would like to know what would happen to one of us if we told a farmer—"You must subscribe to this testimonial, and if you do not, something else will happen to you." Yet this was practically what Captain Plunkett said to the ratepayers of Monanimy. He went to the parish priest, knowing him to be an easy man, likely to be taken in, and perhaps intimidated, and he said—"Subscribe to this testimonial to Hallissey, the blacksmith, you and your people; if you do not, we will flood your district with extra police; we will have night searches. Your flock will be visited; in the dead of night their doors will be battered down with rifles; their humble furniture will be overturned in search of documents; their daughters and their wives will be dragged from their beds; their haystacks will be pulled about; and the whole district will be exposed to all the torture and infamy and hardship which it is possible for police and magistrates to inflict; but if you subscribe to my testimonial—for it is as much Captain Plunkett's testimonial as Hallissey's—those things will not take place, and your district can continue to bear the peaceful character that distinguished it—free from crime and outrage." Fortunately, however, the majority of the ratepayers were not to be frightened by Captain Plunkett's threats, and he was defeated in his little plan; and now, whether he likes it or not, the police tax will have to be removed. But, notwithstanding the great force of police in Cork—notwithstanding that the extra force cost the citizens £15,000 in a time of great depression—the police were unable to protect the citizens from outrages from those who were often spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman and his Predecessor in Office as upholders of law and order. During the election of my hon. Friend (Mr. Deasy), after some inflammatory speeches had been delivered at an Orange meeting, the Lough Chapel was wrecked, every window of it broken, the altar, sacred furniture, statues, and so forth, destroyed, and large stones found next morning on the floor. The right hon. Gentleman talked about his "even keel;" but what had he done to discover the perpetrators of this outrage? What value had the citizens of Cork received for their payment of £15,000 as regarded the perpetrators of this outrage? Have any secret inquiries been made under the Prevention of Crime Act? Had any reward been offered by the Government? Nothing had been done; although it was believed by the general public, upon very good foundation, that Captain Plunkett and the police could place their hands to-morrow upon the perpetrators of the wrecking of the chapel. The outrage remains still unavenged by the majesty of the law, and yet the Government have the temerity to come to this House and say their desire is to administer justice evenly. The right hon. Gentleman had shown that, whatever his private desire may be, he is unable to administer justice. It was, undoubtedly, a great temptation to the right hon. Gentleman, when he entered upon his Office, to spread abroad the belief that a great crisis still existed in the country. A great crisis might have existed in Dublin; but outside Dublin I deny that there was any conspiracy existing in Ireland for purposes of outrage, or for any illegal purpose, although the right hon. Gentleman made no difference in his treatment of Dublin, where there was a conspiracy, and the rest of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to trade upon the Invincible conspiracy, and to represent in his speeches that the whole of Ireland was seething in one vast conspiracy, instead of insisting that his officials throughout Ireland should learn to govern the country without reliance upon exceptional methods, so as to prepare for a return of the time when they would have to do without them, a time which is very fast approaching. The right hon. Gentleman had taught these officials that it would be practically impossible for them to govern the country without exceptional measures. Recourse to coercion is like recourse to opium—the more you have, the more you want. While the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was content with the power of imprisonment, the present Chief Secretary had used every clause of the most stringent Coercion Act over and over again, although there was practically no crime and no movement of any importance to disturb his peace of mind. I want to ask the Irish Government a question. The Coercion Act has not very much more than 18 months' longer existence. Does not the right hon. Gentleman think he ought to see that that Act should be so administered as to prepare for a return then to Constitutional Government? So far as the right hon. Gentleman has gone, he has been adding fuel to fire, exasperating the people, depriving moderate politicians and moderate advisers of the people of all power and influence. I myself have always strongly desired the absence of coercion in Ireland. I think it is not good for the cause of reform, nor for the people, nor the Government. But I cannot help saying that the whole course of conduct of the Irish Executive is directly leading up to the renewal of the Act which was passed in 1882. I regret this exceedingly, and trust that, limited as the time is for the Government to turn over a new leaf, they will make some attempt to dispense with this excessive and stringent enactment, and will endeavour, during the next 18 months, to rely upon the honour of the Irish people that they will check and restrain the zeal of their permanent officials in the use of these keen-edged weapons, so that they may return to what is alleged to be the traditional policy of the Liberal Party. The consideration of what will happen when the Prevention of Crime Act expires is well worthy the attention of the Irish Executive. I do not know the intentions of the Government. I do not know that at the time the right hon. Gentleman came into Office there was a desire on the part of the leaders of the people, and of the rank and file, that any movement should be of a temperate and Constitutional character; but I think the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act has very much changed that spirit; and if the course which has been pursued be followed out to the end, I do not see the least chance of any English Government governing Ireland without a renewal of the Coercion Act, supplemented, perhaps, by more stringent provisions. I should be glad to hear what the Solicitor General for Ireland has to say in reference to this matter. The hon. and learned Gentleman, as Representative of an Irish constituency, must know that, so long as the minority—the landlord class—was able to rely upon such instruments as Captain Plunkett for checking Constitutional liberty, the land improvements which he so eloquently advocated in his address to his constituents would be perfectly impossible; and I should hope that the hon. and learned Gentleman will be able to agree with me in the opinion which I venture to express to the House to-night, that it is high time for the Government to commence the governing of Ireland as if they were not going to rely upon a Prevention of Crime Act perpetually for that purpose.

MR. HEALY said, he hoped the Government would take seriously to heart the admirable speech of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). When he heard the Chief Secretary defending the Irish Administration, he did not believe the right hon. Gentleman's heart was in the matter. He could not believe that the Gentleman who had written the life of Charles James Fox could really be a supporter of a man like Captain Plunkett. Who was Mr. Plunkett? He believed he was the brother or the son of a lord. Well, did being the son or brother of a lord put brains in your head? Did that invest you with extraordinary powers of government? What was there in being a lord, or being a son of a lord, that entitled him to fitness for government? Why, he had seen a good many lords who were fools, and he had seen a good many people who were not lords who were very clever people; and he was inclined to say that the mere fact of Mr. Plunkett being the son or the brother of a lord—he did not know whether he was an honourable something or another—was not sufficient to entitle that gentleman to be made a Resident Magistrate, and to ride rough-shod over the people of Ireland. A lamer defence than that of the Chief Secretary of Mr. Plunkett he had never heard; but that was not the fault of the Chief Secretary, but the fault of his case. When he had a good case, no man could handle it better, and his admiration of how he handled a bad case was becoming greater every day. He said to himself—"When he can make so much out of a bad case, what could he not do if he had a good case?" The right hon. Gentleman had told them they had only suppressed seven meetings. First and foremost, the Government did not know how many meetings Captain Plunkett had suppressed. He (Mr. Healy) was a native of the County Cork, and he had had several applications from that county to attend and address meetings; but he had said—"No; what is the use in them going to the expense of getting out placards and making preparations for a meeting, when they knew very well that Captain Plunkett would cry 'Open Sesame,' and a proclamation would issue from Dublin Castle, and the whole thing would be prevented?" This gentleman boasted publicly that he would not allow a single meeting to be held. Therefore, it was no use for the Government to say that they only suppressed seven meetings. Then, again, why did the Government wish to have meetings suppressed? In order to be an advocate of Land Reform in Ireland you must be a Solicitor General, for the Castle would not allow any other persons to point out the defects of the Land Act; and the reason the Government did not wish others to address meetings on the subject of Land Reform was because they thought it would fill the farmers of Ireland with the notion that they were going to get Land Reform; but when they heard the Solicitor General for Ireland say it, they would say—"We know very well that he is going to break his word when he gets into the House." The Government were quite willing that the Solicitor General for Ireland should tell the people of Ireland about Land Reform, because they knew very well that they would discount what he told them. He did not know if there was a map in Dublin Castle. If there was not, he was prepared to put down a small subscription to provide the Office of the Chief Secretary with a map of the country he governed. With one exception, all these meetings, they had been told, had been held in the neighbourhood of Ballincollig.

Mr. TREVELYAN: Except the meetings in reference to Ferriss, and the Monanimy meeting.

Mr. HEALY said, he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's correction. Then four meetings had been suppressed because they were in the district of Ballincollig. Now, he entirely traversed that statement. A number of those places were 15, 20, or even, he might say, 35 and 40 miles from one another, and had just about as much relation to Ballincollig as the county of Middlesex had to the county of Kent and the county of Dorset; and he wondered that the Chief Secretary—of course, from his want of time to study Irish geography—had allowed Captain Plunkett to impose upon him in this manner. If he would buy one of Bacon's maps, and study the scale, and calculate with a piece of tape what the distance of those places was one from another, he ventured to say he would discover by that means the erroneousness of the argument which he had himself developed in that House. But grant, for the sake of argument, that these suppressed meetings were all in the district of Ballincollig, what was the reason that he gave for their suppression? He said a foul and horrible murder, "most strange and unnatural," had been committed in this district comprising 500,000 people. Take an English town where there were 500,000 people gathered together—such as Liverpool, or Glasgow, or Birmingham—you would think by this there should not be one slaughter in six months. In six months, out of a population of 500,000 people, there were 18 offences reported by the police, some of them of the most trivial description; and the central outrage, on which the case for the Government depended and round which the arguments of the Chief Secretary circled, was this murder. A family had a quarrel about a farm. There was no public feeling whatever about it. The murder was committed on a Sunday, after those persons who committed it had left a public-house. He would like to know whether there was in operation in Ireland an Act called the Sunday Closing Act; and would the hon. Member for Drogheda (Mr. Whitworth), who so vehemently cheered the Chief Secretary and who was so ardent a Sunday Closer, inform the House how this public-house in Dripsey was open for the sale of liquor on that day? This family had a dispute about a farm; and in the course of the dispute, owing to the public-house being open on a Sunday by the favour of the police, they fell to blows, and one man hit another with a spade, or some other agricultural weapon of that kind. This unfortunate man got a blow and died, and the Chief Secretary described it as a murder. A Prevention of Crime Act jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter; and what then became of the argument of the Chief Secretary, that the public meetings of the whole county were to be put a stop to because of a manslaughter committed in a drunken brawl in a particular district? He got up that shrouded kind of mystification which the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster) was fond of maintaining in that House, and said that after this murder two men jumped over a hedge and threatened a third man, and on another occasion a crowd appeared in some particular town and said to somebody else—"Are you John Smith?" and received for an answer—"No; I am John Brown," and the crowd thereupon dispersed. Was the House of Commons to believe that public liberty ought to be destroyed in Ireland at the beck of a Resident Magistrate because of flimsy phantasies of this description? What would take place in Glasgow, or in Liverpool, or in London, where they had murder, he would not say every 15 minutes, but he supposed murder, or manslaughter, or suicide, or something of the kind, every day—what would be said among their criminal population—and Englishmen could boast of being as criminal as any among the human race, so far as murder, and manslaughter, and robbery, and other acts of violence were concerned—what would be said if they were to be denied the right of public meeting because in six months there had been 18 crimes amongst 500,000 people reported to the police, one of which was manslaughter? They could understand frank despotism; they could understand Cromwell or Carhampton; but they could not understand Trevelyan. And what he detested in these Liberals was this—the pretence that it was being done for the honour and glory of civilization; and that, if he might say it without profanity, the Almighty could be brought down from Heaven to preside over their acts in uncivilized countries like Ireland. It was the pretence of horrible, hateful hypocrisy. The brigand who came out to rob on the highway did not carry a Bible in his breeches' pocket—the Briton did, and that was the difference between the two. The Chief Secretary suppressed meetings in order to put down crime. It was extremely remarkable that whether there was crime in Ireland, or whether there was no crime, meetings must be suppressed in the interests of the peace of the district. You pays your money and you takes your choice—you pays your taxes and you gets your British Government. But the Irish people were not be deluded in this manner. They had been trying it for 700 years, and they had not succeeded, and they would not succeed now. He hoped those people who had refused to pay the taxes would continue to make the opposition which they had been making against the payment of those taxes in the interests of scoundrels of the Hallissey type. He ventured to say that if the Irish people were as well armed as the Soudanese the Government would not be so very keen in putting blood taxes upon them. He ventured to say that if the policemen who were so fond of knocking down women and children indiscriminately in Ireland with the butt-end of their guns knew that the husbands or the fathers of these women possessed arms at home in the thatch, and that they would use them in defence of female honour, those policemen would not be so extraordinary anxious to bludgeon the women as they did at Killavullen and other places. The Government were dealing with a defenceless people, and they were acting as the Briton always acted. Wherever they saw the power of resistance, there an Englishman diplomatized and dealt in Circular Notes. That was their game, and they could not deceive intelligent people at that time of the day, for the people of Ireland were thoroughly alive to the situation. The Government might commit these outrages for a time. Let them commit them. Keep at them. The blood of the people ought to teach them to nurse their wrath to keep it warm; and by-and-bye the time would come, and perhaps even the unfortunate people would be able to get square with them. If they could not get square, they would hand down the quarrel to their children; and if their children could not succeed, they would hand it down to their children's children. So long as an Irishman existed in Ireland, and so long as a British satrap existed to oppress him, so long the battle of freedom and right would be continued in their country.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, that the speech of the Chief Secretary had shown the Irish Members what he very much regretted to observe in the administration of Ireland—that persons who performed such functions as Captain Plunkett did in Ireland could always obtain the support of the Government in that House. Any oppression, any injustice, or any tyranny would not be merely condoned and defended by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, but in due time it would meet its reward. By-and-bye, Captain Plunkett would follow Mr. Clifford Lloyd, Mr. Blake, and every other despot in the country, to some foreign clime, to the Ruler of which he would be recommended by the Government. What wonder was it, then, that Captain Plunkett played such pranks when he knew that for the present he had pay, and, if he needed it, praise; and that, by-and-bye, he would receive a more substantial reward at the hands of the British Government, who could procure him employment under the Khedive or some other foreign despot, in order that he might practise in his service the arts of oppression and despotism in which he had been trained by the British Government in Ireland? They were now labouring on so that when the time came they could ask for a renewal of the Prevention of Crime Act on its expiration. No one who watched the state of affairs in Ireland would fail to see that this was part of a deliberate design on the part of the ruling classes and Orange faction to have a renewal of this Act for three or four years more. Mr. Justice Lawson at the Kerry Assizes, some time before, had admitted that the country was very peaceable. He could not, however, leave the matter there, as an English Judge would have done; but he had, as Irish Judges of his character did, added a few words with a view to their being adopted and quoted in the British Parliament. He would quote some of the Judge's words—

> "There was peace in the county, and there was an improvement in the condition of the people, but it was owing to the Prevention of Crime Act."

It was absurd for any statement to be made as to the independence of the Irish Judges. Their Charges were made with a view to being quoted as a subject for political speeches from the Treasury Bench in the House of Commons. He ventured to say that this speech of Judge Lawson would be cited as a proof for the necessity of the renewal of the Prevention of Crime Act. A great deal was said about crime in Ireland; but they never heard of the crimes committed in England. A few days ago, an English newspaper had declared that—

> "Although only three months of the present year had elapsed the air was already heavy with undetected crime in England."

But this, of course, was regarded as a matter of no importance, as it was stated that they were of a different class to those committed in Ireland. If owing to the acknowledged bad condition of the law, the poor peasants, suffering under gross injustice, actuated by the "wild justice of revenge," committed crimes which were, of course, to be regretted, a great outcry was made about it, and the name of Ireland was pilloried everywhere in England, whilst cold-blooded and cowardly crimes committed in open day in the English capital were utterly unnoticed. There was no connection between meetings in Ireland and the disturbances that had occurred; they were due to the misery of rack-rented tenantry, whose condition was without a parallel in any civilized country, and was a standing disgrace to the British Government. Lord Clanricarde drew £30,000 yearly from his property in the Loughrea district, and the rack-rented people were made paupers by a system of absenteeism. On Lord Dunsandle's estate the same evils resulted from rack-renting and absentee landlordism. General Gordon saw the misery of the inhabitants of some parts of Ireland; and in a letter published in *The Times* he stated that, although he had been in many lands, civilized and savage, he had never witnessed anything to equal the destitution and the suffering, and, at the same time, the patience, which existed among the people living on the rack-rented estates of Ireland. Was it to be wondered at that there should be disaffection in Ireland, when Captain Plunkett and every other pasha and bashaw like him were allowed to tyrannize over them? They feared to allow public speech to explode in Ireland, and they got explosions of another kind. He asked the Chief Secretary to consider, even at the eleventh hour, whether it would not be more manly and courageous to remove the grievances which the people complained of than to continue the system of oppression which he was carrying out?

MR. O'DONNELL concurred with the observations which had been made by the hon. Member who had just sat down. He thought it was of as little use to complain to the Government of the conduct of such men as Captain Plunkett as it would be to complain to Satan of the conduct of his imps. He heartily endorsed the sentimates of the hon. Member for Westmeath, whose songs of Irish patriotism had impressed him when he was a student in one of those Colleges which Her Majesty's Government founded in order to stifle in the minds of those instructed there any such sentiments. However, like many other institutions of the kind, it totally failed in its object. The hon. Member had then been one of their guides, and they still recognized him as the exponent of the sentiments which filled the breasts of the majority of the Irish race. A public meeting held under the suffrance of a Foreign Power was not less but more odious in consequence of that suffrance; and, for his part, he preferred that scores of those brutal tyrants like Captain Plunkett should act as they did than that they should have these expressions of hypocritical and pretended friendship of Ireland from the Government Benches. It was worse than the despotism of the Czar of Russia, for under even his sway equality was recognized; but under the rule of England neither liberty nor equality was recognized. Captain Plunkett had done everything to provoke the hatred of the people, and for that very reason he deserved the confidence of the Government. English tyranny in Ireland was only a part of that general system of the exploitation of suffering humanity which made the British Empire a veritable Slave Empire. Wherever there was oppression there they should find allies, and they should take up an attitude of defence commensurate with the area of the tyranny. The rule now maintained in Ireland by the Plunketts and the Jenkinsons and the suave Liberals on the Treasury Bench was no more for the true benefit of the masses of the English people than for that of the mass of the Irish people—it was in the interests of "caste" and clique that this legislation was upheld. The people of England claimed to have a modern Rome in London; but even Caligula granted equal rights to every citizen of Rome. He thought that Parliamentary agitation would not be very effective until the Irish people, crushed down under their present tyranny, effected a coalition with the oppressed Natives of India and other British Dependencies, and all regarded England as the common enemy. They would have the people who had been driven out of their country to remote climes formed together into one solid confederation, determined to obtain the rights which they sought in spite of all opposition. Until that day came Parliamentary agitation would be Parliamentary agitation, and nothing more. They would have every decade new reforms which would only result in increasing the dependence of the Irish people. Englishmen did not appear to awaken to the necessity for reform until they had been taught by the occurrence of catastrophes. As long as the present system continued nothing would prevent the people of Ireland from continuing the crusade against the accursed system which the English people supported.

Main Question put, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 57; Noes 15: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 40.)

[10.20 B.M.]

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883-4).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £27,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad."

MR. COURTNEY said, the Vote for Diplomatic Services in the Papers before the House showed a total of £28,000; but the Government only asked for £27,600, two sums of £200 each, for the International Commission for Revising Mixed Tribunals in Egypt and the Conference at Paris for the Protection of Submarine Cables, being omitted.

MR. O'DONNELL said, there was a charge of £1,800, to cover Lord Dufferin's special mission to Egypt, which had been reduced to £1,600.

MR. COURTNEY: No; the reduction is in connection with Sir William Hewett's mission to Abyssinia.

MR. O'DONNELL said, the charges for Sir William Hewett's mission to Abyssinia, Lord Dufferin's special mission to Egypt, and General Gordon's special mission to the same place, appeared to him to be items of account which required more explanation than Her Majesty's Government had given down to the present, so far as his knowledge extended. Lord Dufferin had gone on a special mission; and, so far as he (Mr. O'Donnell) was aware, the only net result of that mission had been a piece of literary composition on the part of Lord Dufferin, containing a great many recommendations. All those recommendations, or, at any rate, all the principal recommendations contained in Lord Dufferin's Report had been magnificently ignored by Her Majesty's Government. To the best of his recollection, Lord Dufferin had proposed that a *bonâ fide* system of Constitutionalism, or, at least, of popular Government, should be tried in Egypt. Could Her Majesty's Government afford the Committee any information as to how far the establishment of a Government in conformity with the wishes of the Egyptians had proceeded down to the latest date? In reply to a Question which had been put in the House, in regard to the appointment of a magistrate in Ireland to a high position in Egypt, it had been stated that that appointment had been made on the recommendation of Earl Spencer and Earl Granville; but he (Mr. O'Donnell) was not aware that the wishes of the Egyptian people had been in the slightest degree considered from beginning to end. If, then, Lord Dufferin had only been sent to Egypt on a sort of pleasure tour, without any particular object, he did not see why this country should be called on to pay the expenses. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the county of Waterford (Mr. Villiers Stuart) had imposed on himself a special mission in Egypt, and had written books on the subject, and published them; but the cost of these books and of these travels did not appear in the Public Estimates. What, he wished to know, was the object the Government had in view in sending Lord Dufferin to Egypt? If they had an object, and if Lord Dufferin had carried out his commission in conformity with the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, why had no attention been paid to his recommendations? At any rate, could the Government say at what particular point they commenced to disagree with the recommendations of their special Envoy? Manifestly, it would be simply tempting the Treasury to unaccustomed acts of extravagance if the Committee were to allow them to place any Vote they pleased on the Estimates, however notorious it might be that such Vote was represented by no practical result whatsoever. He was also anxious to know for what object Admiral Sir William Hewett went to Abyssinia? The Abyssinian question was one of great importance. No country in that part of the world had suffered more from the policy of the Government than that country. Was Sir William Hewett authorized to redress any of its wrongs? Were any negotiations entered into with the Abyssinian Rulers; and, if so, what was the object of those negotiations, and what had been the outcome of them? He did not wish to press Her Majesty's Government for information unduly; but when they were asked to pay large sums out of the public taxes, it was only reasonable to expect that some explanation of those sums should be afforded. Could the Government give him any information as to how far Lord Dufferin's recommendations had been carried out, or whether they were to be carried out, or with what object Lord Dufferin had been sent to Egypt?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, he hardly thought that the Committee would desire, after the debates which had taken place in that House, to go into the question of Lord Dufferin's mission to Egypt. The matter was fully gone into last year; and, with regard to any particular plan his Lordship might have recommended, the Committee should remember that full information had been laid before the House from time to time in the Parliamentary Papers. As to the institutions Lord Dufferin had recommended, the Papers laid on the Table at the beginning of the Session—"Egypt, No. 1 (1884)."—showed up to what point the representative institutions to which the hon. Member (Mr. O'Donnell) had alluded had been got into working order. No doubt, as he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had fully acknowledged in the debate on the Vote of Censure, recent events in Egypt had, to a certain extent, delayed the full working of those institutions; but the hon. Member's assumption that they had been abandoned was altogether unfounded. The Papers laid before the House showed that the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly had been held, that the President had been appointed, and that it was proceeding to business. As to Admiral Sir William Hewett's mission to Abyssinia, the hon. Member, he was afraid, must have been absent from the House during the discussion in the afternoon, because he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had particularly alluded to the subject in his speech, fully explaining the object of the mission, stating that he did so because the money to be asked for the mission was in the Vote the Committee were to be asked to pass. He had explained what the differences of opinion between the Egyptian Government and Her Majesty's Government were, what were the grievances of Abyssinia against this country, and what were the particular points on which it was hoped they would be able to make an arrangement. He did not suppose the Committee would wish him to go over the same ground twice in one day; therefore, he hoped the hon. Member would not insist on his repeating the explanations he had given. Had the hon. Member been present that afternoon, no doubt, he would not now have asked these questions.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he saw an item of £750 included in the Vote for "Expenses in connection with trials at Alexandria." What was this expenditure for—for prosecuting, or defending the prisoners?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the sum was for the expenses of Sir Charles Wilson and Major Macdonald, who watched the trials on behalf of the Government. He had already explained that Sir Charles Wilson was placed there to see that justice was done—to see that nothing unfair was done to the persons who were being tried; and Major Macdonald's position he had also explained.

MR. MOLLOY asked, whether it was not the fact that, besides the sum in the Vote, Sir Charles Wilson and Major Macdonald were in receipt of salaries?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that that was so; but these gentlemen had been put to extra expense in the discharge of this special duty, which was one of a very onerous and trying kind. He must say that no one ever deserved greater credit for the performance of a difficult public duty than Sir Charles Wilson. This official had been remarkable for the great amount of skill, temper, and patience he had shown in the discharge of delicate and difficult duties.

MR. MOLLOY said, it was not denied that these gentlemen were in receipt of salaries. He wished to know what was the character of the expenses to which they were put, and that this £750 was supposed to cover?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, that these gentlemen had been put to special expenses on account of having to come away from their ordinary occupations, and having to go to Alexandria to perform these special duties, for which they received special remuneration. The ordinary salaries which they were receiving were simply the salaries of military men performing a particular kind of duty. The duty in regard to which this Vote was charged was a special one of an arduous kind, for which these gentlemen were especially fitted through their knowledge of the people and the circumstances of the country.

Mr. KENNY said, he wished to know whence these gentlemen had been taken —where they had come from? Who presided at the trials, and did the person who presided receive a salary, and were his expenses paid?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, that Sir Charles Wilson was first employed in the Consular Service in Asia Minor. He was originally sent out by the late Government; and he was selected for the duties in Egypt because of his great knowledge of Oriental habits and customs, and because it was not only felt that he would possess the confidence of the Egyptian and British Governments, but that everybody in Egypt would feel that, under his care, the interests of all concerned would be protected in the trials.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he wished for an explanation of the item—"Colonel Mansfield's expenses in connection with the celebration of the Bolivar centenary, £200?" What was the Bolivar centenary, and what had we to do with it?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, that it was held under these circumstances. Bolivar was a great patriot in South America, and a great celebration in connection with his name was held this year in Venezeula. It was looked upon as a celebration at which all the peoples of South America —who considered, and rightly enough, that they were under great obligations to that patriot—should be represented. There was hardly a single Government in South America who did not send a special mission. The United States were to be represented; and it was felt that England, having taken such a great part in asserting the liberty and independence of these people in the beginning of the present century, ought to be represented. An allowance was therefore made to the British Minister, to enable him to take his part with the other Ministers in the celebration.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had not clearly explained the nature of the transactions in respect of which Sir Charles Wilson and Major Macdonald received this money. He had not told them how long these gentlemen had been occupied at Alexandria, and where they had come from. He (Mr. Biggar) should like to know whether the trial of Suleiman Sami was one of those that these gentlemen had supervized; and, whether, or not, the noble Lord was thoroughly satisfied with the proceedings in that particular case? Did not the noble Lord think the conduct of these two gentlemen more or less deserving of censure for the part they had taken in that transaction?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the statement he had made as to Sir Charles Wilson was this—that he was employed in Asia Minor, and was sent to Egypt to perform certain duties in connection more especially with these trials. The trials were those which were the subject of the observations of several hon. Members, particularly of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson)—that was to say, of those who were spoken of as the political prisoners. Major Macdonald was employed more especially on the later trials, where the offenders were brought forward in connection with injury to person and property. Amongst these was the trial of Suleiman Sami; and, with regard to the employment of Major Macdonald in connection with that matter, people who took very different views as to the policy of the trial were at one in the opinion that this officer had performed his duties in a manner worthy of the highest credit.

Mr. KENNY said, that notwithstanding the assurance of the noble Lord, that Major Macdonald had discharged his duties in a manner satisfactory to everybody, it was beyond all question that these trials had given great dissatisfaction. No explanation had yet been given as to how the expenses had been incurred. Alexandria was not so far from Asia Minor that it would cost a large sum to get from one place to the other. He could not imagine how this money could have been spent by gentlemen who were already in receipt of a salary, and he therefore thought it his duty to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £750.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £26,850, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad."—(*Mr. Kenny.*)

MR. O'DONNELL said, he was certain the noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had intended the explanation he had given to be perfectly clear and satisfactory, and he could only attribute his failure to make it clear to the general obscurity which surrounded the whole of the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government. They must regard the noble Lord as the victim of his surroundings. On the special question which had been raised by the Amendment, he (Mr. O'Donnell) must certainly express his entire concurrence with the objection raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny). Besides the fact that no case had been made out for the granting of this sum of money to officers who were already well provided for by their ordinary salaries, they could not close their eyes to the fact that these two gentlemen had lent the appearance of their impartiality to what was nothing more nor less than a system of judicial murder, carried out by a beaten tyrant, who had been replaced by British bayonets on the Throne of Egypt. These so-called trials—arrangements just about as deserving of the name of trials as certain drum-head exhibitions that disgraced the period of 1798 in Ireland—were held in the name of the Government of the nominal Khedive, Tewfik, who had no authority, nor power, nor right to issue any commission of the kind, for he had no authority, being merely a puppet of the English garrison. If these trials had been held openly, in the name of Her Majesty's Government, of course there would have been this odium arising, that Major Macdonald would have submitted to a form of trial prisoners of war, and executed those prisoners of war, for acts of war. In order to get out of that difficulty, Her Majesty's Government allowed their puppet, Tewfik, and his advisers—had instructed, ordered, or commanded him, for he had no initiative of his own—to set on foot the so-called tribunal for the trial of a certain number of prisoners of war captured in the recent rebellion. It was to be remembered that the rebellion was thoroughly successful, and that, according to every principle of British law, it was the Rebellion that was the Government. The Rebellion was the *de facto* Government, the authority of Tewfik having entirely ceased. Her Majesty's Government it was who caused Tewfik to set on foot this scheme of trials; and before a mock Court were arraigned a number of prisoners on charges of civil crime, such, for instance, as the alleged destruction of a portion of Alexandria, which was calculated, if left standing, to afford shelter to the invading army—an operation of war perfectly legitimate according to the laws of every civilized country. Matters of that kind were treated as crimes, and officers and soldiers accused of having a share in those operations of war were brought up before these mock tribunals like prisoners guilty of the ordinary offence of incendiaryism. That farce, which could not have existed a moment but for the countenance it got from the nominally impartial authority of officers like Major Macdonald, resulted in a most bloody tragedy; because, before these sham tribunals, officers of a recently successful National Army—successful against local tyranny, although not successful against a foreign invader—were tried and, in some cases, sentenced to death. Sir Charles Wilson and Major Macdonald might be said to have inaugurated this policy of make-believe which had resulted in such terrible consequences to Egypt at the present day. The House of Commons had not been consulted on the question of the appointment of these officers, or as to the institution of the tribunals at which they assisted. The House never even obtained an opportunity of considering the evidence upon which men were done to death by these mock tribunals. He remembered, very distinctly, a Motion being made in that House by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), pleading only for time for the House to consider the evidence against a prisoner of war—Colonel Suleiman Sami—who was about to be done to death by the defeated tyrant and his enemies, whom that same Suleiman Sami had helped to drive out of Egypt. As to the Vote, it was impossible to allow items of this kind to pass without protest. Of course, there was some credit due to the Government for not saddling Egypt with the cost of Colonel

Macdonald's participation in this mock justice; but no mere recognition of the comparative honesty of openly laying the charge on the British taxpayer would have induced him to refrain from pressing, as far as the Forms of the House permitted, his opposition to this Vote. Sami, in reality, had been executed for doing his duty as a soldier in opposition to a Native tyrant, and, nominally, without his orders, against foreign invaders who, without the slightest colour of law or right, destroyed Alexandria. Suleiman Sami had a share in endeavouring to render Alexandria untenable by a foreign enemy, and in that he was only doing his duty. If, in a similar case, an English fortress were in danger of falling into the hands of a foreign enemy, it would be in the highest degree an English officer's duty, when the town was no longer tenable for defence, to destroy so much of it as might afford shelter to the invaders. At the most, Suleiman Sami only did an act of that description, and for doing that act, which it was within his right and his duty to do as a soldier, he was brought before a mock tribunal. The verdict of that tribunal obtained a certain air of respectability from the fact of an English officer like Major Macdonald sitting upon it. The very defence brought forward by the Government for Major Macdonald rendered it more incumbent upon upright and independent Members of the House to vote against an item of expenditure which was the final result of as black a proceeding as had ever been committed even in the assassination policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 11; Noes 71: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 41.) [11.10 B.M.]

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, why, in the Supplementary Estimates for the present year, there should be so large a sum as £7,340, for certain outfits payable on the retirement of three gentlemen from the Diplomatic Service? He observed that £4,000 was the amount of the original Estimate; how was it that, in a Supplementary Estimate, there should be so large a sum, nearly double the original sum; and, how did it happen that the information was wanting in the preparation of the original Estimate?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, this was a very natural question to put. The fact was, there was considerable movement in the Diplomatic Service during the autumn, and it was quite impossible previously to get at the exact extent of it; and, in consequence, it was inevitable that an unusually large portion of the sum payable on outfits should be charged in the Supplementary Estimate. No doubt, it was unusually large this year, owing to the numerous changes in the Diplomatic Service which had recently taken place. The whole subject of these outfits had been often discussed; and the rules in relation thereto were well known to the Committee, for a Committee sat in the Parliament before last in reference to the arrangements of the Diplomatic Body. The principal changes which had led to these payments were the appointments to Italy, to Vienna, to Japan, and Sir Evelyn Baring's appointment to Egypt, and the reconstruction that took place in the ranks of the Diplomatic Body in consequence.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £155, Suez Canal (British Directors).

Mr. MONK said, before the Vote was passed, he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question in regard to it. On Wednesday, last a meeting of the Suez Canal Company took place, when the Convention between the Suez Canal Company and the Shipowners' Association was confirmed by a very narrow majority. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question with regard to the vote on that occasion. There were, he believed, about 1,604 votes recorded then, and the majority was 82. The 1,604 votes recorded represented only something less than one-fifth of the whole of the number of votes that might have been recorded. Probably, the Committee were aware no one was entitled to vote at one of those meetings who did not hold 25 shares, and the holder of those 25 shares was entitled to one vote. But a most singular point in the statutes of the Company was that no person who was the holder of any number of shares, however large, was entitled to more than 10 votes, whether he was the owner of the shares himself, or held them by proxies from others. It was the most extraordinary rule he ever heard of in any Public Company. Usually Directors invited shareholders to send in proxies to the Directors; but, here, no shareholder was entitled to record more than 10 votes. At the general meeting 10 votes only represented 250 shares; and when it was found that only a fifth of the whole number who were entitled to vote were represented, it was rather an extraordinary state of things. Of course, he did not take into consideration the 177,000 shares which were held by the Government of this country. What he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, whether there were not any facilities, or, whether the Government, through the Directors appointed by Her Majesty's Government, could not offer some facilities, for shareholders in this country to deposit their shares with those Directors, so that their votes might be available at the subsequent meeting of the Company? The Chancellor of the Exchequer must be aware that, at the meeting the other day, one of the most important subjects brought before the meeting was unable to be put to the vote, because a majority of two-thirds was necessary to alter any of the statutes of the Company. Now, in order that the Company should have seven additional Directors, it was necessary to alter the statute. The original number was 32 Directors, reduced in 1871 to 21. In order that this country should be properly represented, more than the three Directors at present nominated by Her Majesty's Government were needed; and, with that view, it was necessary that the statute providing the number should be altered, and that could not be done without a majority of two-thirds voting in its favour. Therefore, he wished to ask, whether the Government could not, through their Directors, or in some other manner, offer facilities to shareholders, who were becoming very numerous in this country, to deposit their shares five days, or whatever interval was appointed, before the general meeting, so that this country might have the just weight and voting power to which it was entitled at the meetings of the shareholders?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he was not quite sure whether he was in Order in answering this question on a Vote which was only for the travelling expenses of the Directors; but, as the question had been asked, perhaps he might be allowed to answer it. The fact was that the ordinary rules of French Companies were quite different from those of English Companies, and the Suez Canal Company, though not technically a French Company, but an Egyptian, was framed on the French model. Under the French customary rule, a person holding a large number of shares would not get votes in proportion to his holding when compared with small shareholders. This was in the statutes of the Suez Canal Company, and he believed what took place the other day was in strict accordance with the statutes. The hon. Member (Mr. Monk) asked if the Government could facilitate any arrangement under which the English votes could be recorded. It was reasonable that those persons living in England should have the power to deposit their votes in the same way as those resident in Paris. He thought that might be done; but he would take care to inquire.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he desired to ask a further question in reference to the meeting last week.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not think that would be in Order on this Vote, which was simply for the travelling expenses of the Directors.

MR. TOMLINSON said, but it was to enable the Directors to go to Paris to look after the interests of the British shareholders in the Suez Canal Company, and his question referred to that. What would be the position of affairs supposing, as seemed likely, the shareholders favourable to the arrangement with the British Shipowners' Association were not able to carry their measure by a majority of two-thirds? Would the scheme fall to the ground, or would another be substituted?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he was not prepared to say what might happen in this contingency.

THE CHAIRMAN: The difficulty in this matter, I may point out, arises entirely from the difference in the Vote as submitted to the Committee and the statement contained in the Estimates on which the Vote is founded. The Estimate, as the right hon. Gentleman the

Chancellor of the Exchequer has observed, is on account of the travelling expenses of the Directors; but the Vote put to the Committee is for "Salaries and Expenses" of the three Representatives of the Government on the administration of the Suez Canal Company. The Vote so put ought to be open to the discussion of matters involved in the salaries and expenses of the three Representatives.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £13,700, Supplementary sum, Colonies, Grants in Aid.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH said, there was an item in the Vote of £2,000, in connection with the judicial expenses of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific; and he would like to have from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) some explanation of the precise object for which that Vote was required. He would also like Her Majesty's Government to tell the Committee, if they could, something as to their intentions in reference to this High Commissionership. There had lately been presented an able and interesting Report from a Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Pacific Islanders' Protection Act. Looking at that Report, it would be seen how very much the Pacific Commission had failed in its proper work of suppressing the grave evils of the labour traffic in the Western Pacific. When the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Gordon, was appointed, he was Governor of Fiji; but that post he subsequently resigned, and he was then appointed Governor of New Zealand, and remained so for some time. It was a most anomalous proceeding that he should be appointed Governor of New Zealand, and allowed to retain the office of High Commissioner of the Western Pacific. It was almost as impossible for him to fulfil the duties of both these offices as it would be for him to superintend the Pacific from Ceylon. He was not blaming Sir Arthur Gordon; he blamed the Government. He did not know if anybody else had been appointed to fill the office of High Commissioner since the time, more than three years ago, when Sir Arthur Gordon was appointed Governor of New Zealand. He did not know at the moment who was High Commissioner. [Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, the Governor of Fiji.] Well, what did the Royal Commission report on this point? They reported that the operation of the Orders in Council was hampered by the union of the office of Governor of Fiji with that of High Commissioner, and they distinctly recommended the separation of those two offices; they stated that a sufficient number of Assistant Commissioners had not been appointed, and that the inadequacy of the staff was due to the insufficiency of the funds devoted to the maintenance of the High Commissionership. They said there were two points in the Pacific—the Friendly Islands and Samoa—where the operation of the Orders in Council were fairly successful, and these happened to be the places where Assistant Commissioners resided. The principal recommendation of the Commission was the appointment of a High Commissioner and a Judicial Commissioner, not hampered by other offices, who should reside in places suitable for the performance of their duty; and the appointment of additional Deputy Commissioners who should reside in different parts of the Pacific where their services were required, and be furnished with the proper means of travelling through their districts to see that the Orders in Council were properly carried out. They had a further recommendation as to the simplification of the Orders in Council, and the appointment of labour agents, and a better system of labour licences, so as to put down as far as might be the evils of the labour traffic. These recommendations should receive the very early attention of Her Majesty's Government; and what he hoped to hear from the Under Secretary of State was that the Report of this Commission had at once been taken into consideration, and that action on it would not be delayed pending the consideration by the Australian Colonies of the scheme of a Federal Council suggested by Lord Derby. Any such delay as that, lasting as it might for more than a year, would not be justified. The evils referred to could be dealt with entirely apart from any proposal with regard to the annexation of New Guinea, and the suggestion of Lord Derby as to concerted action by the Australian Colonies. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would give some promise that it was the intention of Government, at the earliest moment, to deal with this most important subject.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he concurred entirely with his right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) as to the inutility of uniting the office of Governor of New Zealand with that of High Commissioner; but he believed that had been altered, and that the Governor of Fiji was now High Commissioner. He understood, some time ago, that the view of the Government was that they could not act upon the Report they had received until they had learned and considered the result of the Federal Convention which had met in Australia; but, he should like to ask, why could they not proceed at once to appoint Deputy Commissioners in respect to Islands in which the High Commissioner had now the power to act? He was perfectly aware that the Australian Colonies desired the annexation of other Islands; but that was no reason why we should hold our hands in respect to Islands where an active trade was carried on, and in respect to which we had hitherto acted. He would ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies to state more fully to the Committee why the Government should refrain from acting, in part, on the Report of the Commission, because they had not received the result of the Australian Convention?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he would first explain the item with regard to legal expenses. It was a case which arose when Sir Arthur Gordon was High Commissioner. He, acting under a clause in the Pacific Islands' Orders in Council, and having had brought to his notice that a man called Hunt was disturbing the Island of Samoa, and acting in a manner dangerous to the peace and order of that place, ordered his removal. Hunt was brought before the proper Court and fined £500. Still, this having no effect, he was forcibly removed by order of Sir Arthur Gordon; but Sir Arthur Gordon made a slip in that order. He was empowered under the clause to remove any such person in custody to any place named as in the Western Pacific Islands. By an error in the order, Hunt was taken to Levuka, and that was in Fiji, and not under the Western Pacific Orders in Council. On that, an action was brought against Sir Arthur Gordon, and given against him. There was a re-hearing, and the accumulated costs given against Sir Arthur Gordon. The costs, he was sorry to say, came to a very large amount—£2,600. Of course, Her Majesty's Government felt bound to bear the responsibility of their officer's action, and the expense; but this Vote would settle the matter, as there would be no further appeal. As to the general matter of the High Commissioner, he recognized, with Her Majesty's Government, the value of many of the remarks of the Committee, but did not agree with some of the recommendations. As to the appointment of a separate High Commissioner, apart from the Governorship of Fiji or New Zealand, Her Majesty's Government thought that was a recommendation of importance, and he hoped shortly to announce the name of a High Commissioner, apart from any Governorship. He would point out to the right hon. Baronet opposite, who wanted to know why this question was interwoven with the question of Colonial Conventions, how many points would be greatly affected by action which might be taken in consequence of a Convention. The first question was that of expense. Anything the Government might do at all commensurate with the demands of the Western Pacific would involve a large expense indeed; and if they had the Australian Colonies contributing, then *pro tanto* the Government could do a great deal more. One of the principal difficulties of the Pacific Commission was that they had no control over foreigners. Over British subjects and Natives they had; but over foreigners they could have none without some international arrangement. He need hardly point out how very much the whole position might be affected if the Australian Colonies federated and acted in co-operation with Her Majesty's Government. The Resolutions of the Australian Convention would be submitted to the respective Legislatures; and he was informed by the Agents General, that they hoped that Bills founded upon those Resolutions, if adopted, would be passed by next June, so as to allow Her Majesty's Government to introduce, in this present Session, an Imperial Act recognizing the binding together of an Australian Federation.

MR. O'DONNELL said, this was a subject to which he had lately given a great deal of consideration, and he was greatly afraid that the sketch of policy which had just been made by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) was one which would be viewed with something more than doubt by every friend of the Native population in the Western Pacific. The Minister looked forward to legislation founded upon conclusions arrived at by the Australian Colonies; but it was exactly the Australian Colonies that were the great danger to the Native population of the Western Pacific. It was in order to supply the labour to the wealthy planters and employers in Australia that the Islands of the Western Pacific were being ravaged by traffic hunters, who really were the most odious description of slavers. What concurrence could they expect from the Legislature of Queensland? Throughout Queensland the Native witness, the imported Polynesian, was not considered fit to give testimony before a magistrate of the Colony; no matter what ill treatment he might receive from his employer, he was not considered competent to give evidence. Legally, he believed, it had been held that a Polynesian might give evidence, if the magistrate was satisfied that he was a person who had a moral sense of the obligation of truth-telling; but the point was that the employer magistrate of Queensland could not be persuaded that a Polynesian had the requisite moral faculty of testifying to his own ill-usage at the hands of his employer. The Minister hoped that Australia would bear a portion of the expense of maintaining the police of the Western Pacific. If Australia were to pay any share of the expenses of maintaining the police of the Western Pacific, that police would be exceedingly badly maintained. It was well known that the police were hand and glove with the labour traffickers; indeed, the *Chargé d'Affaires* in London complained that all kinds of outrages were committed on labour traffic vessels, with the full cognizance and connivance, forsooth, of the very men who were on board for the ostensible purpose of repressing them. The Commission recommended Her Majesty's Government to take upon themselves the whole burden of responsibility and expense of the police of the Western Pacific. What a mockery it was to be expending the hundreds and thousands of pounds in suppressing slavery in Oriental countries, while, in the Western Pacific, a most odious system of slavery was carried on by British subjects, and Her Majesty's Government shrunk from an expenditure of £50,000 or £100,000 which might be required to put the system down. The Royal Navy might be usefully employed in the police work of this Archipelago. The Minister also pointed out the difficulty of dealing with foreigners. If the British Government dealt with the British subjects, so much of the evil would be removed. Her Majesty's Government might count on the support of Germany in putting down the slavery he complained of. Most of the Native outrages which called for the interference of Her Majesty's Government were outrages brought about by a feeling of revenge in consequence of the acts of slave dealers, the acts of British desperadoes from all kinds of British Colonies, engaged in making money by a practical system of slavery. If Her Majesty's Government put off dealing with this feeling until they could get the hearty co-operation of the Australian employers, in whose interest slave vessels were trading, Her Majesty's Government would be parties to the continuance of a horrible system, which was depopulating one of the fairest regions of the world, and which was cursing one of the most simple and peaceful Native populations with every cruelty and vice common to the very lowest kinds of civilized humanity.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY feared the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. O'Donnell) spoke from imperfect information. So far from the Australian Colonies, with the exception of Queensland, being interested in the labour traffic, they would probably do much to discountenance and suppress it.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER (Lord Mayor) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had alluded to one point which was well worthy of the attention of the Committee. The point was as to what weight was to be given to the testimony of the Natives. In dealing with these unfortunate people they were dealing with a class of men of no education and men whose testimony might, to a certain extent, require great sifting. It ought not to be assumed that, as a matter of course, a White man's story was right, while the Native's testimony was wrong. In that respect, he wished to emphasize the remarks of the hon. Member for Dungarvan. He hoped the attention of the authorities would be given to the question of how much credit was to be given to the testimony of Native witnesses.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) that, however erroneous his views were, they were not formed upon one-sided evidence or upon the evidence of the people of the British nationality. He was prepared to supply the hon. Gentleman with one piece of evidence, and that was to the effect that, to a considerable extent, the system of labour traffic, and, to a very large extent, the system of land occupation in the Native Islands, were bound up with the interests of the influential classes and persons in all the Australian Colonies.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY asked if the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) was aware that the Australian Colonies had, at the Convention, passed a self-denying Resolution to the effect that they would discourage all occupation of land on the part of White people?

MR. O'DONNELL asked if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) was not aware that every Colonial Establishment of the British West and every Legislative Assembly had passed Resolutions of the most exemplary virtue with regard to the treatment of Native races, but that, in practice, it was found that our Trans-Atlantic and Trans-Pacific subjects required quite as much looking after as subjects of Her Britannic Majesty nearer home.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £11,327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, and the Island of St. Helena."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that when the question of the Transvaal Convention was last brought under the consideration of the House, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) made certain announcements which were somewhat gratifying to the House, and added that other matters to which he could not then refer would be considered, and a decision respecting them would shortly be arrived at. Now, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would only allude to two of those other matters. First of all, they found in the Convention, the text of which had now been presented to the House, that the debt due from the Transvaal Government to this country, which already had been reduced in the most liberal way by several concessions to the Transvaal Government, had been further reduced by about the sum of £130,000. He did not wish to quarrel with that further reduction; but he thought that they ought to know what was the ground for it, because the Papers which had been presented contained no argument whatever by the Transvaal Delegates which proved the inability of their country to pay the debt. No reason was given why the Transvaal should be excused the £130,000, and, so far as he could observe, no statement had been made of the grounds which had induced Her Majesty's Government to remit it. The second point was one of greater importance, inasmuch as it related to the position of the Natives within the Transvaal. The Committee would remember that, at the time the original Transvaal Convention was settled, Sir Hercules Robinson, by authority of Her Majesty's Government, announced to those Natives within the Transvaal, who had hitherto been Her Majesty's subjects, that it would be one of the British Resident's special duties to see that the provisions of the Convention in their favour were carried out, and that they might rest assured that, though the country was about to be handed back to its former Rulers, their interests would never be forgotten or neglected by Her Majesty's Government, or by Her Majesty's Representative in South Africa. What was the position of these Natives now? The Resident was absolutely gone. There was to be no one in the Transvaal representing Her Majesty's Government, or able to pay any regard to the interests of the Natives, except, possibly, a Consul or Consular Agent;

and the sole provision in the new Convention affecting the matter was contained in the 19th Article, by which the Government of the South African Republic engaged faithfully to maintain the assurances given to the Natives as to their freedom to buy or otherwise acquire land, as to the appointment of a Commission to make out Native Locations, as to the access of Natives to Courts of Law, and as to their being allowed to move freely within the country, or to leave it for any legal purpose under a pass system. The special duties which, by the original Convention, were incumbent upon the Resident were of very material importance. It was provided that the Resident and the President of the Transvaal, together with a third person to be named by them jointly, should form the Native Location Commission. That Native Location Commission had not only to fix the boundaries of the Native Locations, but to act as a standing body of Trustees, through whom alone the Natives could hold land. Well, now, very little of the work of the Native Location Commission had been actually done. There was a statement in the Blue Books recently published, showing with what great success the Native Location Commission had given out a tract of land of something like 40,000 acres in extent, to one tribe in the Transvaal, and the prosperous circumstances in which, accordingly, that tribe was situated. As far as he was aware, that was the single instance in which the Commission had done any work. Was it to be left in future to a Commission appointed by the Transvaal Government alone, to settle the new Locations and to act as Trustees for Natives holding land within the Transvaal? If that was so, he thought an injustice would have been done to the Natives of the Transvaal, and that Her Majesty's Government had given up, in the new Convention, a matter which was of great importance to the interests of Her Majesty's former subjects, and had deprived themselves of a right, the exercise of which would have been most valuable to the Transvaal Natives. He also wanted to impress on the Government some points relating to that part of the Convention which was understood, when they formerly discussed this matter, to have been satisfactorily arranged. The House were then told that the Transvaal Delegates had agreed to exclude from the Transvaal territory the trade route from Cape Colony to the interior of the country, and also the whole of the territory belonging to the friendly Bechuana Chiefs who had formerly been our allies, and that that would be secured not only by the assurances of the Transvaal Government, but by a Commissioner, aided by a body of police, in British and Colonial pay, to prevent the raids of freebooters. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had then stated his satisfaction with this arrangement, although it imposed a great responsibility upon this country; but he certainly supposed that the agreement had been come to with the full concurrence of the Transvaal Delegates. It appeared, however, that Lord Derby originally proposed to the Transvaal Delegates not only that the boundary should be fixed as it had been fixed by the Convention, but that, after the boundary had been so settled, the Transvaal Government should take effective measures to prevent their citizens from trespassing beyond the frontier, and bear their fair share of the cost of repressing such outrages as had lately occurred. What was the reply of the Delegates to that proposal? They actually had the audacity to ask for the inclusion of the trade routes and the whole of the territories of the friendly Chiefs in the Transvaal. When Lord Derby proposed the terms of the Convention, together with the establishment of the Joint Protectorate of the Imperial Government, the Cape Colony, and the Transvaal, over the territory in question, and the division of the cost among them, they replied that the proposed arrangement would, in their opinion, cause new and more serious complications, and would be dangerous to peace and order in South Africa; that they feared it would cause new trouble and bloodshed; and they preferred that sooner than that boundary line should be taken, the old boundary line should be adhered to as one which, after much bloodshed, had been secured. They further said they were firmly convinced that the modifications recommended would cause more bloodshed, because the tribes would be again torn asunder, and the rights of some would be infringed by other tribes, and, therefore, they could not be accessory to the bloodshed which was easily to be foreseen. That was not a free consent to the boundary line laid down in the Convention; and it was probably on this account that the Delegates, in the draft Treaty they sent to Lord Derby, said they were not possessed of full powers to complete a Treaty, but merely presented themselves as Delegates, and the Convention must be subject to ratification by the Volksraad. If any hon. Members cared to look back to the objections raised to the Western boundary laid down in the original Transvaal Convention, they would find them precisely the same as those now urged. What hope, then, was there that this new Convention would be observed? The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had informed the House that he had received a series of telegrams from South Africa, beginning on the 29th January, in one of which it was stated that the freebooters were actually marching to attack Mankaroane's principal town. They had actually heard from another source that the Transvaal Government declined to interfere to prevent the threatened outbreak on the Bechuana Frontier, on the ground that they were not in a position to recognize the new Convention. He did not wish further to dwell on this matter at that hour; but, looking to the opinion expressed by the Transvaal Delegates on the single point on which Her Majesty's Government had felt it necessary to insist, and seeing that the Government had taken no steps to appoint a Commissioner, or a force of police, on whose action the maintenance of the new boundary must depend, he could not attach much greater importance to the boundary laid down in the new Convention than to the boundary in the old Convention. He feared that what had passed did not warrant much hope that the new boundary would be observed, or that the rights of our allies among the Bechuana Chiefs would be respected, as they ought to be respected, through the action of the Government.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he felt that he owed some apology to the Committee for detaining them at so late an hour; but the subject was a very serious one, and full of difficulty, and unless the terms of the new Convention were now discussed, there might be no other opportunity of doing so before August next. As to the past policy of Her Majesty's Government, he would only refer to it generally, for the purpose of showing what lessons and guidance we ought to derive from it in our future dealings with the South African Republic. The Convention of Pretoria apparently—that was, in terms—protected our Native allies and the loyal Natives, both without and within the Transvaal. They were protected by the limitation of the boundary line, and by the retention of Her Majesty's Suzerainty. But he (Sir Henry Holland), and others, had pointed out that protection, if confined to writing and signing the Convention, and remonstrances of the Resident, would prove of little avail to the Natives, if, as was anticipated, the Boers disregarded the Convention. A Convention which one party was not prepared to enforce was not likely to stand in the way of the other party, if desirous to infringe it. He would venture to read to the Committee, upon this point, some pregnant words of Sir Hercules Robinson in a despatch of November 23rd, 1883, which would be found at page 107 of Parliamentary Papers [Transvaal C, 3845]. He writes—

> "I am bound to say that I do not think the Convention, under existing circumstances, is of any real benefit to the Natives. The Transvaal burghers obviously do not intend to observe any condition in it distasteful to themselves, which Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to insist on, if necessary, by the employment of force. Her Majesty's Government, I understand, do not feel justified in proceeding to this extremity; and no provision, therefore, of the Convention which is not agreeable to the Transvaal will be carried out, whilst what is agreeable will be observed without reference to the Convention.

There could hardly be a stronger condemnation of the past policy of Her Majesty's Government, and of their want of firmness in dealing with the Boers. What had happened in the past should serve as a warning for the future. Early in this Session he had asked for a declaration from the Government as to the course they would pursue if this new Convention were broken; but the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had declined to give any information, and said that we had no right to assume that the Boers would break this Convention. But, looking to the past, the country would not be satisfied unless the Government make some such declaration. Along with a condonation of past breaches, and with a statement, if the Government desired to guard themselves, of their own belief that like breaches would not occur again, let the country have a distinct statement of the intention of the Government, should breaches occur; and let it be a statement that due observance of this fresh Convention would be enforced. Such a declaration would tend to prevent breaches, while the absence of it would encourage the Transvaal Government to renew their former tactics. Looking to the past they might well doubt the future action of the South African Republic. The Transvaal Government were not satisfied with the Pretoria Convention; they remonstrated against it, and they broke it. The present Delegates were not satisfied, and it might be assumed that the Government which they represented would not be satisfied, with the new Convention. They would not be satisfied until the Sand River Treaty of 1852 was again recognized as the basis of a new arrangement—in other words, until they had complete liberty of action; nor would they be satisfied with the boundary even as altered; and, as had been pointed out, they seemed to prefer the old Convention Frontier line. Must we not then fear that, being dissatisfied with this as with the former Convention, they would again pursue the same tactics and line of conduct as heretofore; that they would foster trivial disputes, and connive at their subjects crossing over the frontier to assist one Native tribe against the other, and then to seize land and settle down on it beyond the frontier line, as in the case of Stellaland and Goschen? He (Sir Henry Holland) could not view the present state of things as at all satisfactory. In the first place, the chances of peace and order were greatly diminished by the establishment of the now United Republic of Stellaland and Goschen; a Republic composed of freebooters and adventurers from the Transvaal, Orange Free States, the Cape, and even Europe. Was that "robber" Republic, as Sir Hercules Robinson called it, to be recognized; or, even if it were not recognized, were these freebooters to be allowed to keep their stolen property, the land which they had seized from the Natives? What check was to be kept, and by whom, upon their proceedings? Something could be learned from the Correspondence of the views of Her Majesty's Government. But there was nothing stated in the proposed Convention, although part of this Republic fell within the new boundary line of the Transvaal. He thought that some special and clear understanding upon these points should have been arrived at, and embodied in the Convention, if future complications were to be avoided. Would not the South African Republic, directly or indirectly, compel the freebooters—not very desirable subjects, but who would now be within the Transvaal—to cross over the border? If so, there would be great danger of disorder arising in the land outside the frontier, and great danger of ruin to the Native Chiefs, against whose territories these freebooters would surely move. Would the vague language of Article 2 of the Convention prevent that? He thought not. And it must be observed that there was no distinct engagement in writing by the Delegates to the reasonable understanding mentioned by Lord Derby in his letter to the Delegates, of January 25, 1884, which ran as follows:—

> "If, then, you accept the boundary offered by Her Majesty's Government, it must be understood that you do so without any reservation, and under an honourable engagement that the State will co-operate loyally with Her Majesty's Government by enforcing order within its own borders, and by preventing its subjects from making encroachments on the Native territories beyond the borders of the Transvaal State, as expressly provided in the 19th Article of the Convention of Pretoria."

He would like to have seen some clause to this effect inserted in the Convention; but the Delegates evaded this point, and only assented to the three conditions which had been put forward by themselves. He (Sir Henry Holland) wished to know what Her Majesty's Government proposed to do under Article 2 of this Convention? He gathered that they assented to the suggestion made by Sir Hercules Robinson, to treat all land outside the frontier line as an independent Native territory under the joint protection of Great Britain, the Transvaal, and the Cape Colony. But he observed that the Cape Government only assented to assist in this joint protection, if the Transvaal Government consented to join. There were, however, no signs that the Transvaal Government had or would consent to join; and, indeed, the terms of the third condition above referred to seemed opposed to any operation of the Transvaal Government beyond the frontier. It was, then, quite possible that Her Majesty's Government would have the sole protection and responsibility for this territory outside the frontier line; and the Committee were entitled to have a clear answer from the Government to the following questions:—First, if the Transvaal Government and the Cape Government declined to assist in a joint protection, would Her Majesty's Government undertake alone to protect the territory outside the frontier; and, secondly, would such protection, whether sole or joint, extend to the territories of Mankoroane and Montsioa, or only to that large part of Stellaland and Goschen left outside the frontier? Another unsatisfactory point in these negotiations was the position of our Native allies, Mankoroane and Montsioa. It was not merely that each had lost some part of his territory, because such loss could well be borne, and would be amply compensated for, if peace and order were thereby secured to them in the territories left under their power. But would such peace and order be secured? We had stood by while Stellaland and Goschen were created, and now we had accounts that an attack was threatened, if not actually accomplished, against Mankoroane by persons from that Republic. This boded ill for future peace and order; and the more so, as the territory of the aggressive South African Republic would now intrude between these two Chiefs, and thus lessen their power of resistance, while exposing them more readily to attack. He contended that something more definite in favour of these Chiefs should have been inserted in the Convention. He would conclude by a reference to Zululand, which was included in the Estimate now under consideration; and he would ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what was the real state of affairs there; whether the Government intended to allow the present state of disorder and fighting to continue; whether they would allow Usibepu to be left to fight it out with the Usutos, who had been supported, and wrongly sent against him, by the Government *protégé*, Cetewayo; and whether they did not think it high time to intervene and restore order in that unfortunate country?

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, he wished to know whether the Government had any news confirmatory of the report of an attack upon Mankoroane? He had repeatedly called attention to the misdeeds of the Boers, and he was anxious for another opportunity. He had a Notice on the Paper dealing with the subject; but that was not likely to come to anything; therefore, unless he now made a few observations on the subject, he might find himself precluded from doing so for the rest of the Session. He wished to express his deep regret at the fact that Her Majesty's Government had entered into a Treaty with a body of men who were—and this, he thought, hon. Members would not dispute—amongst the greatest slaveholders in the world. On a former occasion, the hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) was supposed to be a great advocate of these people; and he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had been glad to hear him confess that he was not their advocate, and was not prepared to stand up in the House and defend the misdeeds of the most atrocious slaveholders in the world. Her Majesty's Government had been unfortunately induced to enter into a Treaty with these people. His opinion was that if we had done our duty by them, and had never had anything to do with the Treaty of Pretoria, a great deal of the bloodshed they had been discussing in the earlier part of the evening would never have happened. That bloodshed had occurred through our having given in. It was supposed that, under the Pretoria Convention, we had gained a great point by getting the Boers to style themselves the Transvaal State, giving up the notion of calling themselves the South African Republic. The Boers had been prepared to pay us a certain amount of debt, and to allow a Resident at Pretoria to protect the interests of the Native races; but all these points had been given up. These people had entered into a solemn Treaty; but when they sent a deputation over to England, Her Majesty's Government gave way to them, and abandoned almost everything, including their interest in the Native races. Her Majesty's Government had lost *prestige*—a word he knew perfectly well they did not like—

but, more than that, they had consented to give up a considerable portion of the debt due from the Transvaal State to this country. In what position did the Natives, whom we had undertaken to defend, stand at this moment? If the Government were prepared to send troops to their assistance, in the way they were doing in another part of the world, for what appeared to be a doubtful object, we and the Natives would stand in a different position; but, having given up all the points to which he had referred, if Her Majesty's Government remained inactive, what would be the position of our unfortunate Native allies? These people had trusted us, depending on the faith of Great Britain, depending on the honour of British officials. They had shed their blood for us, and all to no purpose. We had now abandoned them, leaving them at the mercy of their inveterate enemies. He was very much afraid that the history of the next two or three years would show that many of those who had trusted us had to pay for their implicit confidence by seeing—those of them who survived — their friends slaughtered or ill used, in consequence of our having handed them over to these slaveholding Boers. History would show that we had abandoned them to massacre and bloodshed, and that their misfortunes had all come upon them by trusting to the good faith of British Administrators. A Native Chief had been recently murdered, and he had a Notice of Motion with reference to the matter. [Mr. COURTNEY: Order!] The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury called him to Order for mentioning a matter about which a Notice of Motion had been given. The hon. Member would, perhaps, use his influence with the Government to secure for him (Mr. R. N. Fowler) facilities for discussing the subject at a time when he would be in Order. He most deeply regretted the fact that Her Majesty's Government had entered into a Treaty with a set of slaveholders, whose word was not to be trusted. [*Cries of* "Agreed!"] He was glad hon. Members opposite "agreed" with him, and hoped they would make their views felt on the Front Ministerial Bench.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it seemed to him that if the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) proceeded to answer all the questions which had been put to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. N. Fowler) and the hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), they would have rather a prolonged Sitting before them. If they were to go into the circumstances of Zululand, the future policy of Cape Colony and Natal, and the frontier question as affecting the Transvaal and the neighbouring territories, and, besides that, were to consider the refurbishing of British honour in South Africa, and the rather complicated question as to how the Government proposed to make amends in South Africa for the disgrace of the Soudan campaign, he was persuaded that hon. Members would never be able to get away in time for Divine Service on Sunday morning. He therefore begged to move that the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. It was a speaking commentary on the system of administration that prevailed in these days to observe that on a subject of this importance the only two Members who had addressed the House had been almost silenced by drowning cries of "Divide, divide!" and "Agreed, agreed!" coming from Benches which had been empty the greater part of the Sitting, but were now partly filled by hon. Gentlemen, who, apparently, would be much more comfortable than they were now if they were at home. The House had only been sitting five weeks; but anyone would think, looking at the fact that the Government had begun to take Saturday Sittings, and that Members were so impatient, that they had been hard at work for five months. There was a pretty general belief, which he believed to be well founded, that the manner in which Parliamentary Business was at present carried on did not admit of the affairs of Ireland being properly administered.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) has intimated that it is his intention to move to report Progress. I must point out to him that the remarks he is now making are not relevant to that Motion.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was coming to that point. They were actually invited to continue sitting here to consider a Vote relating to the administration of Ireland; and he wished to know—for he presumed some

Minister would speak on behalf of the Government—whether they were to begin considering the Vote when it was already Sunday? If the Government would agree to postpone the Irish Vote, he would not press the Motion for reporting Progress; but if the Government thought hon. Members were to sit there discussing the affairs of South Africa until 2 or 3 o'clock on Sunday morning, and then enter upon a long discussion of the affairs of Ireland, he should persist in his Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O' Connor.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that on Thursday night he had shown, most conclusively, that it was absolutely necessary that the whole of the Supplementary Estimates should be taken on Saturday. [Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Not at all.] He had shown, step by step, that it was absolutely necessary that the Supplementary Estimates should be disposed of to-night. The Government and their supporters had done their utmost to economize time, and avoid speaking—to speak as little as possible—in order that they might get through the Supplementary Estimates. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies was prepared to reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor, and the series of questions which had been put to him relative to the affairs of South Africa. When this Vote was disposed of, it was proposed to take the one remaining Vote, which it was distinctly understood, by agreement with the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), should be taken to-night. Under those circumstances, he must oppose the proposal to report Progress; and he hoped the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who, as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, knew how important it was that their financial rules should be observed, would withdraw his Motion and allow the Vote to be proceeded with.

MR. SEXTON said, he would not follow the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer through his elaborate examinations of the arrangements of the financial year in reference to the Appropriation Bill; but he would point out to the Government that if they insisted on taking the postponed Irish Vote for the County Courts that night, it would be necessary for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to give a full and categorical reply to the questions which had been raised while the Speaker was in the Chair, and which remained unanswered. After his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had spoken, the Chief Secretary for Ireland and six Irish Members subsequently addressed the House in full and argumentative speeches. Several questions of importance were raised, and remained unanswered. They would use all the Forms of the House in resisting the taking of the Vote that night, unless it was accompanied by a full statement on the part of the Government.

MR. HEALY said, the Government were convinced yesterday they would not then be able to get the Vote. There were then a number of Motions before the Speaker could leave the Chair, and it would have been 6 in the morning before the House could have gone into Committee. Again, to-day there were a number of Motions, though all were not brought on. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might think it hard to be kept sitting so long, and so it was. He (Mr. Healy) had himself a Notice of Motion, which he did not bring on, in order that the Irish Vote might be reached within a reasonable time. But the whole of the early part of the Sitting was taken up with quite another subject; while for the Vote in which a small number of Irish Members were interested, they were kept until the end; and now, in about an hour's time, perhaps, they would get to the Vote, and there would be two or three hours of an Irish discussion, with Liberal Members endeavouring to howl it down in order to get to bed. Now, he offered a compromise, and would give an undertaking that they would not attempt to count out the House, if Liberal Members, not interested, would go home to bed.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he had not taken part in the discussion while the Speaker was in the Chair; but he would, with great pleasure, answer any of the observations made by hon. Members in reference to Irish grievances.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he could not follow the explanations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the importance of getting the Votes that night; but he certainly understood from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), in the course of discussing a Saturday Sitting on the previous day, that it was undesirable to take the Votes after to-night, or Monday at the latest. He certainly understood the Vote might as well be taken on Monday as on Saturday. Why, then, after sitting 12½ hours, insist on taking all the Votes? Why not finish the South African Vote, report Progress, and take the Irish Vote on Monday? There was no understanding that the Committee should be kept sitting until 2 or 3 o'clock on Sunday morning to finish the whole of the Votes. It might be possible for a Minister to put a quart into a pint bottle; but it would be exceedingly difficult. Seeing they had reached a time when it would be only decorous to go home, why not do so, when the Business would be properly got through by postponing the Vote.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, what his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) said last night was that he was quite correct in the computation he made and stated to the House, and that the last Vote in Supply must be taken to-night; but he said the Report of some of the Votes might be taken on Monday—the Report, not the Votes. That was correct. The Report of the Votes not taken last night might be taken on Monday.

Mr. WARTON said, he had Notice of a very important Motion for that evening; but he had not brought it on, in order to facilitate Public Business. What he had now to say was, to protest against the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom all admired and respected, following in the steps of the Prime Minister, and using arguments similar to those used three years ago, with a success all must remember. The Committee would remember all the arguments about the necessities of the law used on the 14th March, 1881, when the Prime Minister established, to his own satisfaction, that "Urgency" was required to fulfil the requirements of the law. With regard to this very argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his demonstration, it came to this—that the law required that certain Votes should be passed by March 31, so that everything might be done in order. But the one great failure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was this—that he obliterated altogether two days from his calculation. He said the Treasury officials required a day for their own purposes; but the law did not give that, though the Treasury officials wanted it. More than that, the Treasury had Sunday to themselves; but the Government did not scruple to ask the Committee to sit on Sunday morning, in the opinion of many violating a sacred day. Another failure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that he had left out of view that it was quite possible for the other House to suspend their Standing Orders, and take two stages of a Bill in one day. But the Government tyrannized over the House, after having taken up time with the nonsense of Grand Committees and Reform Bills, and then hon. Members were asked to sit on Sunday morning. He should support the Motion for reporting Progress, for it was conduct unfair to Irish Members, who were entitled to have a full discussion of the Vote in which they were interested.

Mr. KENNY said, at the time the arrangements for a Saturday Sitting were entered into, they did not foresee the discussion which had taken place early in the Sitting, and the proceedings which had been stigmatized by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in certain terms. The Irish Vote would give rise to considerable discussion; the debate on the question of the Irish magistracy, while the Speaker was in the Chair, referred to one instance only, and the range of discussion was limited; but the Vote would open up the action of the Government on several occasions, and the discussion, if continued, would probably last to 6 in the morning. If the Committee were prepared to go on, then let it be so. What did the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland think of discussing such a subject on a Sunday? He (Mr. Kenny) really hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to acquiesce in the very reasonable suggestion of his hon. Friend to postpone the Vote, and give Irish Members the opportunity of discussing what they considered a very important subject.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, if he really thought it was necessary for the Public Service that these Votes should be passed that night, he would have no hesitation in withdrawing his Motion; for, though he was not particularly concerned in promoting the object of the Prime Minister and his assistant in Ireland, he did not want to do anything unreasonable. But he objected to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement that he had convinced the House that it was absolutely necessary to pass the Votes by the date he mentioned. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman he entirely failed to convince him. He did not attach the least importance to that statement of dates; indeed, it must be apparent to the Committee that it was misleading. His calculation was quite faulty as to the number of days the House of Lords required. Appropriation Bills had passed the House of Lords in much less time.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he had allowed the same time—two days.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, what the right hon. Gentleman allowed for was that the Royal Assent should be given on some other day than Saturday; but he did not see why noble Lords should not come, with no more inconvenience to themselves than Members of the other House, who were required to meet at 12 on Saturday, and sit on into Sunday morning. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was at least four days out in his reckoning, and he was perfectly certain that the Public Service would not suffer by postponing the Vote to Monday. But, as probably the Committee would continue to wrangle some time longer unless he withdrew his Motion, and as he did not see the use of keeping everybody out of their beds, he would, for the present, postpone his Motion, expressing a hope that when the next Vote was reached, the right hon. Gentleman would consider it reasonable to report Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, the first question asked him was in reference to the Transvaal Debt. They had taken a round sum, but to arrive at it they had divided the debt roughly into three portions—the amount the Government took over with the annexation; the amount contracted during the occupation; and the remainder—namely, compensation paid on behalf of the Transvaal. They retained the first and third portions, striking out the middle, the debt contracted during our occupation. Then he was asked about the Native locations. Of course, if we withdrew the Resident, we must leave these internal affairs to the Boers. It had been said it was not safe to trust the Natives to the Boers; but the fact was, if you ceased to govern the interior affairs of the country, you must get rid of all those arrangements which, under the Pretoria Convention, allowed the Resident to interfere with them, which interference, upon the showing of hon. Gentlemen opposite, had turned out simply a failure. But he did not think, in these matters, there was any reason to distrust the Transvaal Government. They had never robbed the Natives of their land, except when they had been engaged in war; there were several locations of Natives which had existed for a considerable number of years. Taking the Convention as a whole, he would point out that it was all very well to criticize it; but the Government had done the best they could, and anyone who read over the Correspondence and negotiations would see how very much more the Boer Leaders asked for than they obtained. They, no doubt, tried to make the best fight they could; but Her Majesty's Government remained firm on the most important points. The hon. Baronet the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) seemed to fear the alteration of boundaries. Stellaland and Goschen had been brought within the Transvaal Border, and would form part of the Republic; and that was done on the representation of Mankoroane himself, who said these territories might be placed in the Transvaal, if he were, at the same time, to a certain extent, protected. These two Republics would be within the Transvaal, and the South African Republic would join with us in repressing disorders. The conditions referred to as attached to the consent of the Transvaal Government must be read in connection with Lord Derby's despatch of the 25th of January, 1884, giving his opinion as to the construction to be put upon them now. As to how encroachment was to be prevented now that we had settled the boundary, he must first of all demur to the statement that the Transvaal Government, as a Government, had ever, by acts of commission, violated the Convention. What they charged the Transvaal Government with was neglecting to see that the Convention should be fully observed. What Her Majesty's Government had done was to take measures that the police arrangements should be effective. They had appointed a Major Lowe to the head of the police force. He, in conjunction with Mr. MacKenzie, the new Resident, would organize the force which, according to Mr. Scanlen, the Cape was ready to assist in maintaining. He hoped that, before many weeks were over, the police force would be in full operation. Of course, what would occur would be this —that as soon as any inroad was made by an individual or a body of men into the territory, they would be laid hold of by the police, and this would be a means of checking inroads. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) said something about the Delegates not showing their sincerity by signing a ratification. He (Mr. Ashley) understood there was no legal power of ratification, except that possessed by the Volksraad. It would have been impossible for the Delegates to ratify this Treaty. He was not there to defend the Boers; but he protested against his right hon. Friend (Mr. R. N. Fowler) asserting that the Boers were the greatest slaveholders in the world. That was not so. Lastly, as to Zululand. He would not venture to follow the long speech of the right hon. Gentleman upon the condition of Zululand; but he would briefly say that the condition of Zululand had been powerfully modified by the death of Cetewayo; and the Government had under consideration what further new arrangements should be made. It could not but be noticed that the Reserve Territory had undoubtedly been a very great success —that was to say, it had been absolutely free from any disturbance, and that its frontier had never been invaded. It must also be borne in mind that the creation of this Reserve Territory, so far from being annexation, was a great means whereby annexation might be avoided. Whether the Reserve should be extended, or some other arrangement made, was matter for further consideration. Her Majesty's Government would not place over the Zulus anyone who might be distasteful to them; and his hope was that the Government would be able, by some extension or modification of the present state of things, to bring back a considerable amount of peace and quiet.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he rose to explain that a large part of Stellaland and Goschen was left outside the new frontier line, as appeared from the statement of Sir Hercules Robinson at page 105 of Parliamentary Paper [C. 3841], and from the fact that Vryburgh, the capital of Stellaland, was also outside the proposed new boundary. It was to this territory that his question to the Government applied.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin."

Mr. BIGGAR said, he would move to report Progress. It was now 1 o'clock on Sunday morning, and surely, at such an hour, the Government would not be so unreasonable as to expect the Committee to enter upon a new discussion. Already the Sitting had been very prolonged—13 hours—and, therefore, hon. Members ought not now to be asked to transact further Business. He need not remind the Committee that they had had several very late nights during the present week. Thursday night and last night the House did not adjourn until a late hour; and, as a matter of fact, the present would have been a very long Sitting, supposing they had commenced Business at 4 instead of at 12 o'clock. It was most unreasonable for the Government to expect them to sit longer.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, it was impossible for the Government to assent to the Motion; and he would suggest to the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), and the hon. Gentlemen sitting round him, that the Motion was hardly consistent with what they said a short time ago. He (the Marquess of Hartington) quite understood that hon. Members were willing to go on with this debate on the understanding that his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) would be prepared to give answers to certain questions which might be addressed to him. He believed his hon. and learned Friend was willing to give the answers required of him. Certainly, there was no possibility of consenting to report Progress now.

MR. SEXTON said, he wished to point out a second time, what it ought not to have been necessary to point out at all —namely, that the Government had not yet replied to the great bulk of speeches delivered when the Speaker was in the Chair. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan) made a speech which was supposed to be a reply, but which, practically, was not a reply at all; because it left all the salient points of the weighty indictment brought by his hon. Friends unanswered. The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) heard the speeches of the senior (Mr. Parnell) and junior (Mr. Deasy) Members for the City of Cork; he heard the speech of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), and those of the hon. Members for the Counties of Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and Westmeath (Mr. Sullivan); he was an attentive listener to the charges made, and the allegations brought by those hon. Gentlemen; and if the Government really meant to go on with that discussion, he could not suppose they wished hon. Members to make their speeches over again before they answered. He called upon the Government to proceed with their answer.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the reason why he did not speak in the previous debate was, as he had already stated, that the Members of the Government were anxious, as far as possible, to economize time in order that there should be no excuse for not finishing the Votes that night. If this Vote were taken up now, he would answer any of the observations made by hon. Members opposite; he should be glad to give any explanation which occurred to him.

MR. MOLLOY said, he would remind the Committee that if the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) did what he said he would do, he would occupy at least one and a-half hours' time, and that would bring them to half-past 2 on Sunday morning.

MR. BIGGAR said, he would appeal to the Government whether they were in earnest in asking the Committee to commence a fresh discussion at that hour on Sunday morning? He had not the slightest doubt that there was some means of getting out of the difficulty; in fact, the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) did not say there was no means of surmounting the difficulty. It was only a technical difficulty after all. They might expect that the first two Army Votes would be obtained by 1 o'clock on Monday night; and, therefore, he maintained it would be much more convenient to all parties concerned to postpone this Vote until Monday.

MR. HEALY (who rose amid cries of "Oh, oh!") said, it was apparent, judging from the condition of hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House who tried to howl him down, that they had not been in attendance since 12 o'clock on Saturday. If they had been, their spirits would scarcely be so gay and lively as they now were. He ventured to throw out the suggestion that it would be well if the Government engaged some Scotch Sabbatarian to maintain order during the Sittings of the House on Sunday mornings. What he particularly wanted to point out was the way Business had been conducted by Government during the past week. [*Cries of* "Question!"] If hon. Gentlemen who cried "Question" would give him half-a-minute, he should be able to prove, even to their intelligence, that he was talking to the Question. On Monday, they adjourned at 2.30 A.M.; on Thursday, at a quarter to 4; on Friday, or, in other words, Saturday morning, at 2 A.M.; and now here they were, on Sunday morning, sitting at 1 o'clock. He asked the Government whether they really thought hon. Members were in a condition to discuss Votes at the present hour? He fully appreciated the difficulties of the Government; and he believed that if the Government had treated the Irish Members more reasonably in many ways, they would not have been pressed so hardly by those Members now. He knew the Government were anxious to bring on the second reading of the Representation of the People Bill, and that that was the reason why they were so anxious to get these Votes. He was as anxious as the Government for the success of that Bill, and he would be happy to do what he could to facilitate its passing. It was not reasonable, however, to ask the Committee to go further that night. Hon. Members from Ireland had made several speeches concerning Captain Plunkett; surely they were not expected to repeat them before the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) replied. What they only wanted was an answer to what they had said at an earlier part of the evening.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he thought the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) had made a very fair proposal; and he noticed that when his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland spoke just now, and said he was quite ready to give any answers required of him, the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) appeared to regard that also as a reasonable proposal. What he understood the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) to say was that he and his hon. Friends did not want to make more speeches to-night on the Vote. ["Oh, oh!"] He certainly understood the hon. Gentleman to speak to that effect. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) would make a full statement in reply to the speeches which had been made. That would meet the case of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy), and would be a full and fair reply to the charges which had been made. Hon. Members must remember that it was not pleasant for the Members of the Government, or anyone who had hard work to perform in the daytime, to be kept in the House until this hour of the morning. He, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a servant of the House, was bound to repeat that, unless this Vote was taken that night, great confusion indeed would result in financial affairs. As it was, the House would sit on Saturday next. He trusted they would now hear the reply of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Walker), and then allow the Vote to be taken.

MR. BIGGAR said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, unfortunately, misunderstood what was said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). What the hon. Gentleman wanted was that, first of all, they should have the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, and then discuss the Vote afterwards; and that was really what the Irish Members desired—they wanted a reply to their speeches from the hon. and learned Gentleman, and after that they would like to report Progress, and finish the discussion on the Vote on Monday next. He would really suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would be to the convenience of all parties concerned that they should postpone until Monday not only the Vote, but the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman. It would be extremely unpleasant to report Progress immediately after the speech of the Solicitor General for Ireland, so that they would have to discuss the Vote after the hon. and learned Gentleman had done speaking; and then the hon. and learned Gentleman, or the Chief Secretary for Ireland, might require to reply to them; and then, again, they might require to reply to any further arguments they might advance.

MR. WARTON said, he hoped that the Government would bear in mind that they themselves were partly responsible for this waste of time. It was only the previous night that two distinguished Liberals took up six or seven hours which might have been saved. There was not one Conservative Member who brought forward any Motion on going into Supply.

MR. SEXTON said, that what he and his hon. Friends had endeavoured to convey was that they should desire to hear the Government reply before they spoke again. If the Government intended to accede to the request of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), and had decided upon proceeding now, the Irish Members would listen, with all attention, to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor

General for Ireland; and as he proceeded, and before he concluded, they would be in a position to decide how far they were to carry on the debate.

MR. BIGGAR: I ask leave to withdraw the Motion to report Progress, so that we may hear the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), and then we will see what will happen after that.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would proceed to reply to the speeches of hon. Members from Ireland with reference to the charges which had been brought against Captain Plunkett. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN rose to Order. He wanted the Chairman's ruling as to whether the hon. and learned Gentleman would be in Order in replying to observations made in a previous debate?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have not heard what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland is about to say; but I understand this Vote comprises payments to magistrates, and I believe Captain Plunkett is a magistrate; therefore, the hon. and learned Gentleman is quite in Order in commenting upon the charges brought against that gentleman.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he understood that the charges which were made by hon. Members in respect to these particular magistrates were, that they had prohibited meetings and imposed the police tax. It was not Captain Plunkett who had really proclaimed the meetings. It was his duty to furnish to the Government information bearing upon every meeting that was likely to occur in the district of which he had charge, and for the peace of which he was responsible; but when he had discharged that duty, and given the information he possessed, the responsibility of issuing the Proclamations rested with the Government, as well as the duty of deciding whether a particular meeting should or should not be held, as likely to be prejudicial or not to the public peace and safety. He was only the person who furnished the information which led the Government to adopt a certain course, and they had acted on that information with regard to certain Nationalist meetings. These magistrates furnished information perfectly impartially as to Nationalist and Orange meetings; that information was furnished at the request of the Government, and, having received that information, it was the duty of the Government to exercise their powers under the Crimes Act, and preserve the public peace. At the Enniskillen meeting, a man was savagely assaulted by a party of something like 50 persons, and was killed by what were called agricultural instruments. A man was tried for that murder, and the hon. Member knew that if a man was indicted for murder it was open to the jury to find a verdict of manslaughter; but the life of that man was taken away by a number of people—50 or thereabouts. That being so, and several of these meetings having been held, the Government felt it necessary to proclaim any further meetings. Other crimes had taken place, and the Government, having received information that these other meetings would be dangerous to the public peace, proclaimed them. It might be said that in those cases the Proclamations were only issued shortly before the meetings were to be held, and it might be asked why that was. That showed the care of the Government.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN rose to Order, and pointed out that the hon. and learned Gentleman was referring to a previous Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have heard nothing from the hon. and learned Gentleman which is not in Order with regard to the Vote.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he was dealing with the argument that the Proclamations did not appear until a short time before the meetings were to be held. The reason was that before a meeting was to be proclaimed, the case was carefully weighed, and with a desire that free speech should not be forbidden. The first desire in the mind of the Irish Government was that free speech should not be interfered with, except where the public peace and safety were endangered. Therefore, in every case the reports were carefully weighed before the Proclamation was issued. He perfectly agreed with the assertion that was made by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) that in such a case as that of the Rev. Mr. Ferriss, of Castlelyons, County Cork, public feeling was excited. Public feeling would, undoubtedly, run very high when, as in this particular case, the parish priest having been evicted from his house, was living in the chapel yard. Now, in such a case as that, knowing the relations between the parish priest and his flock, knowing that there was a landlord who had asserted his rights—rights which the law gave him—he asked hon. Members opposite if any one of them had attended a public meeting and had used, in relation to the case of Mr. Ferriss, such language as they had used in the House of Commons, did they not think that language would have tended, or might have tended, in the hearing of excited people, to produce the very result against which those who had to administer the Crimes Act were working—namely, danger to the public peace and public safety? It was the duty of the Executive, in such a case, to protect the men who had legal rights; and he could well imagine, if such a meeting were held, that the landlord who had exercised those legal rights might, perhaps, be endangered if such a meeting were held under such circumstances. Take the meeting at Kiblicoll. That was held for the purpose of opposing the police tax which had been imposed on the district. Why was that police tax imposed? It was imposed on account of the opposition shown to the man Hallissey. That man, beyond all doubt, was "Boycotted" before any allegation was made as to a shot being fired. It was said he was poor; it was said he was a man receiving out-door relief. Was that man so low as not to be a care to the Executive; was his life to be of no concern to the Executive; and was it right that that man should be "Boycotted?" The information before the Executive was that he was an honest man ["No, no!"] He was speaking of the information before the Executive, and the information was not contained in Reports made by Captain Plunkett, but by others. ["Name, name!"] Hon. Members could not expect, when he was called upon to speak on a matter of this kind, that he should remember all the names. The facts were these—that Hallissey was a blacksmith; he was "Boycotted," and he was receiving, in consequence of having been "Boycotted," out-door relief; he had become a pauper, and the extra police were "Boycotted" in the district. It was said that £500 a-year was a crushing burden to place upon the people of the district. For the purposes of argument he would admit that that was so. What was the observation that had been made in that House by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien)?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he he thought the Chairman must have heard what the hon. and learned Gentleman had just now said. No one had preceded the hon. and learned Gentleman in the debate, so that he must now be referring to a previous debate. He asked whether the Solicitor General for Ireland, therefore, was in Order?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Gentleman will not be in Order in replying to any discussion which has taken place in a previous debate. I understood he was referring to the conduct of Captain Plunkett as magistrate; but he would not be in Order in referring to a previous discussion.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would admit that he was travelling beyond the limits allowed him. Returning, however, to the police tax, he would ask if it would be right for anybody to say, or to argue, that the police tax was not to be paid? He had admitted, for the purposes of argument, that the tax was a crushing burden. Now, an idea was got up in the district, not originating with Captain Plunkett at all, that there should be a subscription, amounting to £50 or £60, raised in the district amongst the people who were bearing this crushing burden of £500 a-year, with which Hallissey and his family should be removed from the district. [Mr. HEALY: It originated with Lanyon.]

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) not to interrupt the hon. and learned Gentleman.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Be it so, with Captain Lanyon. The idea, however, was not carried out, and the crushing burden remained. Recently, when the Lord Lieutenant was down in the neighbourhood a memorial was presented to him—he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) could not say whether it was signed by 14, or by any larger number—a memorial was presented by some people representing the district, as, for instance, the parish priest, who certainly would naturally be taken as a representative of the people. That memorial having been presented, the Lord Lieutenant, who was always desirous that the police tax should be removed as soon as possible, said—"Let it be paid up to the 31st of December, and let it be seen that there is no outrage and harm done to Hallissey. From the 31st of December that police tax shall cease." He (the Solicitor General for Ireland) regretted exceedingly that, in the course of this debate, he had not heard a single word spoken by hon. Members opposite which might have the effect of enabling this tax ceasing to exist as from the 31st December. When hon. Members had, as he hoped they had, at heart, the interest of the district, when they had represented this police tax to be a grievous and crushing burden upon the poor people of the district, they ought to be most careful not to let fall any word which would interfere with the merciful action of the Executive, when the Lord Lieutenant told them, through their parish priest, that on the 31st December the tax should cease, for the small consideration that Hallissey should cease to be "Boycotted." Now, what were the facts respecting the imposition of the police tax? Captain Plunkett was one of the magistrates for Kerry, Cork, and Limerick. Throughout the whole of County Limerick no police tax had been imposed. In Cork there was this district of which he had been speaking, and in Kerry there were several districts in which police taxes existed; but Captain Plunkett had more than once himself represented to the Executive that the taxes should be removed from certain districts over which he had charge. As a matter of fact, 95 of these so-called crushing burdens had been withdrawn, in consequence of the intervention and representations made by Captain Plunkett himself — ["In Kerry?"] No; over the whole district. Such was the value of the charge against Captain Plunkett with respect to the imposition of police taxes. He (the Solicitor General for Ireland) had said already what course Captain Plunkett took in regard to the prohibition of meetings. No knowledge had come to the Government of any of the violations of the right of public meeting complained of; and, so far as the Government were aware, there were none—the people, in all cases, quietly dispersed when the Proclamation was read. Captain Plunkett had been charged under three important counts; and he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) hoped hon. Gentlemen would admit that he, in what he had just stated to the Committee, had endeavoured to discharge the duty resting upon him.

MR. O'BRIEN said, that, after listening to the extraordinary statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (the Solicitor General for Ireland), he was not very much surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have observed modest silence during the earlier portion of the debate. He had taken a note of a couple of the points the hon. and learned Gentleman had made. The first was a somewhat extraordinary one—namely, that it was not Captain Plunkett who suppressed meetings at all. Why, the whole marrow of the case made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was that Captain Plunkett's advice was the advice that was taken by Earl Spencer on his going within that particular district. The right hon. Gentleman plainly intimated that the information of the Executive upon these topics was derived, and their decisions were framed, upon the advice that was given by Captain Plunkett. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to take credit to Captain Plunkett for not having done any worse than Resident Magistrates had done in the case of Orange meetings in the North. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) might have remembered what was the consequence when an Orange demonstration was proclaimed in the city of Londonderry, of which he should know something. Were the police and military filed in; were contingents met as they were met at Castlelyons, and chased through the country; were they dispersed unceremoniously and told they would not be able to hold a public or a private meeting? No; the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) was allowed, in face of the Proclamation, and in the presence of the police in Derry, to make an incendiary speech to a large crowd, which subsequently burnt Lundy's effigy. On the other hand, while Mr. O'Connor was having an interview with the Resident Magistrate, the village crowd who had collected to hear him were set upon by the police, and men, and women, and children were knocked down and bayonetted. Such was the comparison which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had invited between the policy which was pursued towards Orange meetings in the North and that which was pursued towards Nationalist meetings in the South. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland harked back upon the one murder, the one lurid event which illumined the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was doubtful, however, whether it was a murder at all—whether it was not simply manslaughter. He (Mr. O'Brien) would tell them plainly what the facts of the case were. The thing arose out of a drunken squabble. People were coming out of a public-house, and the man who killed Spence had no more notion of committing a murder than he had of flying. The Judge took the same view; a Crimes Act Jury took the same view; and even in his Charge to the Grand Jury, Judge Johnson expressly stated that this manslaughter of Spence was not of an agrarian character, and had no relation to the agitation that was going on in the country; but, of course, Dublin Castle preferred the opinion of Captain Plunkett to the opinion of Judge Johnson, who, on one or two occasions lately, had had occasion to differ with the procedure of the Crown Prosecutor. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had the courage to touch a point which the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with a little more prudence, avoided. He attempted to account for the fact that the proclamation of meetings was invariably delayed up to the time when it was impossible that full notice could be given to persons who were coming to take part in the meetings. What excuse did he make? He said the delay showed the care with which the Government investigated the case of each individual meeting. Now, what was the case of the Chief Secretary for Ireland? That not only did the magistrates know that the meetings would be objectionable, but that the leaders of the National movement ought to have known it, for it was notorious. So the Nationalists in Cork were supposed to have such knowledge of the desirability, or the undesirability, of holding meetings, that they could have decided right off whether or not a meeting could be held in a given place; and the Government, with all its sources of information, with Captain Plunkett on the spot, could not decide until the eleventh hour, or half-past the eleventh hour. The care showed was the care to help Captain Plunkett in attempting to exasperate the people into some conduct that would give him the opportunity of being once more in evidence to justify his continuance in the district. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland referred, in a cursory way indeed, to another class of facts brought forward; but he once more prudently ignored altogether the violence and insolence with which the magistrates and police enforced their proclamation, and he almost hinted it was in kindness to the people that Mr. O'Connor was prevented from addressing the people. Was it kindness that the contingent from Connaught, after marching for 14 miles from a district where they could not have heard of the proclamation of the meeting, were set upon without the slightest notice, without any formalities of the Crimes Act being complied with, no proclamation read, no summons to disperse, no time given to disperse, but instantly set upon by the police, and chased for miles through the country? Not only that, but the mendacity with which Captain Plunkett and his subordinates had attempted to cloak these facts had not, in the slightest degree, been accounted for. Nobody had given an explanation of the fact that the Chief Secretary for Ireland told him (Mr. O'Brien) that there was no crowd there at all; that they were never charged; that the whole thing, from beginning to end, was a delusion. He had quoted that night the evidence of man after man who was assaulted by the police, and who saw persons knocked down, kicked, and brutally maltreated. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had referred to the case of Father Ferriss, who had combined with others for a reduction of rents. These tenants claimed an abatement of 20 per cent on their rents; and Father Ferriss, having been most prominent in the combination of tenants to enforce this, was pitched upon for attack by the landlord, and driven from his home. What was the fact? Two other tenants went into the Land Court and got their rents reduced much below the rate for which Father Ferriss and others had combined. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland plunged into the case of a man whom he (Mr. O'Brien) believed was called Hallissey. He thought that name was pretty well impressed on the minds of the officials in Ireland; at any rate, he hoped after that night there would be no mistake about that name, and the facts of a case which had been grossly misrepresented until this discussion took place. The story of his being fired at was now given up entirely, and the only pretext for the fine of £500 a-year on this poor mountain parish was that he was "Boycotted." What was that "Boycotting?" One threatening letter, according to Captain Plunkett, was sent to him. Was not a man who was capable of inventing the story of his being fired at also capable of writing a threatening letter to himself? One fact had been very successfully put out of sight—that the "Boycotting," the threatening notice, and the alleged attempt to shoot him occurred about the same time, and very close together. This man had been utterly broken down in business, and was a drunken profligate; and he was thoroughly obnoxious to the people of the neighbourhood. What more likely than that a fellow of that kind, taking advantage of the time when the informer and the getter-up of outrages were having a good time under the Crimes Act, what more likely than that this man should write a threatening letter to himself, and back that up by a story that he had been fired at? Not only was there a possibility of such things, but a case of the kind actually occurred. A man named Ellis, or Elliot, in Armagh, shot his own horse, and told the police he had been fired at; he lodged a claim for £500 for malicious injury. He had an Emergency man for a confederate, and, some facts being discovered, he was brought to trial, and sentenced to six months' hard labour, as well as his confederate. And so should Hallissey have been treated, instead of being made the object of bounty, and a testimonial from the people he had tried to injure. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland said a mere sum of £50 was required to relieve these people from the crushing burden of the police tax. No doubt most thieves would be glad to compound with rich people for a few pounds, and rich people might agree to it, rather than be knocked down and garrotted. So it might have been said to John Hampden, when he resisted the imposition of ship money in England, that it was but a trifling sum; for his assessment was something like £1 16*s*., and he was not a man to consider that an excessive burden. But the ship money of those days was a fair tax compared to this infamous imposition, made arbitrarily and capriciously, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland admitted, at the beck and will of a police officer in Cork, and made on the statement of a perjurer, for a perjurer he had proved. He need detain the Committee no longer. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland wound up his speech with something like a threat; he hinted that if hon. Members on those Benches continued to expose Captain Plunkett's dealings with Mr. Hallissey, then the Lord Lieutenant would have his vengeance by retaining the police in that parish of Monanimy. He (Mr. O'Brien) believed, if it was a safe game to play, Lord Spencer would play it; their confidence was not in his fair play, but his fears. Why did he remove that tax in Monanimy? He removed it in obedience to a memorial from 14 people. He was memorialized before by a large number of people, and the signatures included the name of Lord Listowel; of Mr. Eaton, a Resident Magistrate, who declared the police unnecessary. Mr. Hickey and Mr. Starkey, other magistrates, in giving the decrees for the tax, admitted it was unnecessary, and an unjust one; and Lord Spencer was little moved by this memorial. On the contrary, Mr. Foote, another magistrate, objected, and demurred to signing the memorial, and he was exempt from the levy. No; Lord Spencer gave heed to the memorial got up at his own instigation; and the decision, which was supposed to be the outcome of this memorial, was a sham to cover Lord Spencer's retreat from an impossible position. The people had risen up against the tax; they had shown that the collection of the tax was not so easy a matter as the collection of a landlord's rent. They had given to the rest of the country an example of how this tax was to be got rid of, and that example was beginning to tell all over the country; and Lord Spencer thought it wise to put an end to this evil example by pretending to relent to a memorial of 14 persons out of the parish, three of whom wrote three days after to repudiate the whole thing, and say that they signed under false pretences. He removed the tax, because he thought it was convenient to Dublin Castle. Well, he would not be likely to restore it, for that would be very inconvenient to Dublin Castle.

Mr. HEALY said, whatever the English people might think of getting important Votes at 2 o'clock on Sunday morning, he thought the Irish people would not quarrel with their Members, but would think they were engaged in a holy task in exposing the grievances of their country. He had listened to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) in the hope of extracting something like an answer to the case; but whether it was owing to the interruption of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Patrick O'Brien), or some other cause, they had only received a watered-down version of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was natural it should be so; for both spoke from the same brief, and knew nothing of the facts, except what Captain Plunkett chose to tell them. There might be 20 speeches from the Government, but none of them shed any new light; they were only Captain Plunkett over again, dished up with various changes of phrase in which right hon. Gentlemen furbished up their thoughts. But there was one extraordinary omission from both speeches—not a word of the police tax in the City of Cork. What was the case for it there? £1,000 a-year was imposed on that city, simply and solely at the behest of Captain Plunkett; that was the main charge of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork; and yet the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland sat down without saying a single word upon that with regard to the tax. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland said they should have been delighted to have got Hallissey out of the country, and have escaped from the burden of £500 a-year by paying £50; but he must ask the Government why they did not put Hallissey on Mr. Tuke's fund? How was it they thought £5 enough to emigrate an unfortunate Irish farmer, while not less than £50 was required to furnish the travelling-bag and dressing-case of Hallissey—£50 for an impecunious blacksmith in receipt of out-door relief before he was "Boycotted," and £5 for an honest Connemara farmer ground to powder by his landlord? In fact, the emigrant ship, in their case, was done as cheaply as the coffins were done in 1848. He supposed that an emigrant was shipped across the Atlantic for £5, and the coffins was provided for the poor wretches in Ireland at 5*s.* a-piece. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, having abandoned the shooting at Hallissey, took refuge in "Boycotting." How was he "Boycotted?" The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland told them he was "Boycotted;" and now it was made a condition of the non-imposition of the police tax that he should not be further "Boycotted." Would the right hon. Gentleman venture to give the Committee a definition of "Boycotting?" If he (Mr. Healy) met Hallissey, was he supposed to take off his hat to him? If he wanted a horse shod, and there were two blacksmiths in the district, must he be obliged to choose Hallissey? The Government had got themselves into a complete mess, out of which they would find it hard to extricate themselves. They objected to any system by which the people showed their repugnance to a man who they thought had acted improperly, and that system they called "Boycotting." What was the particular species of action on the part of the people against which complaint was made? They were told that, in order to get rid of this police tax, every farmer in the district must send his horses to be shod by Hallissey. Why, they were told that the Lord Lieutenant, in response to a memorial of 14 persons, headed by the parish priest, promised to relieve the people of the tax. It was very strange that the remission of the tax should have signalized the hunting expedition of Lord Spencer in this neighbourhood. He presumed that if Lord Spencer had not gone down to hunt, the tax would still have been on; it was very strange that the reason the tax was taken off was that Lord Spencer and others of his kidney might hunt foxes in this district. Captain Plunkett had sworn to keep the tax in existence, and there was no doubt that if he had had his way that burden would still have been cast upon the people. That was the worst of this system of police Pashas. Fortunately for the people, Lord Spencer went down, and in the interest of fox-hunting took the tax off; in point of fact, the taking off of the tax was a slap in the face for Captain Plunkett; it was practically a declaration that the tax had been improperly imposed, and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had not even said a word in favour of the imposition of the tax. Let him (Mr. Healy) point out what the imposition of this tax meant to the blacksmith Hallissey. He had the advantage of police protection. Other persons of Hallissey's class thought it a small gold mine to be guarded by the police; half the bankrupt landlords of the country were delighted to have police protection. It was not like the Chief Secretary for Ireland, to whom, of course, to be protected by the police was a nuisance; but Mrs. Hallissey received £2 a-week for lodging the police, and she supplied them with milk and other small necessaries; so that they not only got a subsidy from the Government, but made a profit by lodging the police who were guarding them. Hallissey had now achieved a sufficiently world-wide fame to induce Mr. Schnadhorst to put him up as a fit and proper person to represent some English borough in Parliament. It was no small matter for a man like Hallissey to have achieved European fame; he now was spoken of in the newspapers side by side with General Gordon and Count Bismarck; indeed, there were many men who would pay the price Hallissey paid for his fame. With regard to the statement that Captain Plunkett was very anxious for the removal of the tax, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that Captain Plunkett had taken off the police tax in Kerry had nothing whatever to do with the subject. He had put his foot down in Monanimy, and sworn that, so long as he was Pasha, the unfortunate fellaheen of Monanimy should pay the police tax. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) make capital out of the remission of the tax in Kerry; but it was an extraordinary thing that Captain Plunkett withdrew the police from Castleisland the moment the people of Monanimy make a fight. Captain Plunkett put on his thinking-cap for a moment; he thought that resistance might spread, and that the people of Castleisland had shown themselves a people who were not to be trifled with. When Captain Plunkett found that the people of Monanimy resisted the police tax, he took it off the thorny district of Castleisland, he well knowing that they were not people to be lightly meddled with. A statement was made in the course of the day that the Prevention of Crime Act would soon come to a termination. He (Mr. Healy) viewed the termination of that Act with equanimity. Let the Government renew it if they dared, and let them re-impose these taxes if they could; let the Government do their best; but let the Government understand this—that they in Ireland defied the Government to govern the country against the will of the people. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, while he was in power, might gain a little favour with his Party, and he might, while in Office, say—"I keep the country quiet; I am the man who, in face of danger and difficulty, remained steadfast to my post, and, with an honest heart and truthful spirit, I draw my salary quarterly." But whatever credit the right hon. Gentleman might take for his two years of the Government of Ireland, he (Mr. Healy) would not like to say when the men who succeeded the right hon. Gentleman would be able to take the same credit. In the ordinary course of time, if the Liberals remained in Office, the right hon. Gentleman would be called up higher; but he was now laying up a store of ill-feeling that would not die away. The little children of Monanimy, who were now going to school, were hearing from their fathers what was taking place. The Government might pass their remedial measures and their Land Acts; but the children of Ireland knew that their fathers had been made to pay, by a Liberal Government, a tax of £500 a-year, on account of a miserable, dissolute profligate, who was taken in by Captain Plunkett. The plague spot of Hallissey would remain for generations, and there was no district in Ireland in which there was not a similar fester which would keep the minds of the people open to hate and despise their rulers. Let them govern the country if they could, impose their police taxes, renew their Crimes Acts. The Government had done their worst. What was it that they had done for the Irish people that they could have avoided doing; what was it that they had done to them? They had imprisoned them, they had hanged them, they had taxed them. What further infamy remained to be imposed? Would no ray of sense penetrate the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland? He was not even supported by the Tories. Was it nothing to the right hon. Gentleman that he was dealing with men who it could not be denied legitimately represented the Irish people, the people who hated the way they were governed, with an intensity and ferocity that would find vent in other ways, had they the means? Was it nothing to the right hon. Gentleman that, out of 103 Irish Members, he had not a single one, save his own Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), to support his policy? What were they governing the country for? Was it in the interest of the Irish people, or was it in the interest of the English people? What did England make out of it? Ireland was actually being turned into a milch cow for persons like Captain Plunkett to draw their salaries out of it. There would be some satisfaction if the money which had been, or was being, stolen, was turned to good account. Who was this man Plunkett? He was a man who was invariably to be found either puffing a cigar at the South Mall at Cork or playing billiards. What did the English Government gain by their government of Ireland; where was the gain to-night to the British Government by the imposition of this police tax? They had incurred the hatred of the Irish people; they had incurred the hatred of their Representatives; and, even from a Party point of view, how much better would it be for the Liberal Party at the present moment to go along with the majority, instead of the minority of the Irish Members? He and his hon. Friends had their duty to perform. Duty was a sacred talisman and watchword of the English; every possible kind of throat-cutting, extravagance, and confiscation had been justified by the Englishman from time immemorial under the sacred name of duty. Duty! What crimes are committed in thy name! The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would get up to-night and tell the House that it was absolutely necessary that in the case of Hallissey police protection should have been provided, and that the burden of £500 a-year should have been imposed upon the unfortunate people of the district. With regard to Mr. Hallissey, he was at least as respectable as many persons of that description whom the Government employed; and he would invite the Government to do something for Mr. Hallissey, so as to rid the people of him for a time. He might be made a Resident Magistrate, and then he would be able, when necessary, to invent threatening letters. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had referred to the case of the clergyman, Father Ferriss, and said he had had three years' rent, and, therefore, was not entitled to the sympathy of any honest man. The right hon. Gentleman's statement was rather peculiar with regard to rent. How did he know whether the rent was just or not? The Government were apparently satisfied that the rent was just, and argument was useless with the Government. There were, however, Ambassadors in this country who recognized the fact that the chief weakness of the Empire lay in the Island which locked up so many of its troops.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the question of these Resident Magistrates was one which, he thought, was entitled to attention, and one upon which he felt himself called upon to offer some observations. These gentlemen had no mercy for the people; and he thought, if the Government would take the trouble to inquire into the facts of cases beforehand, the House would be spared trouble afterwards. But the Irish Members were determined that so long as their people, be they high or low, rich or poor, were oppressed and ground down, so long they would endeavour in this House to get some satisfaction for them. That was their fixed and unalterable determination, and the Government would find that as the Parnellite Party was multiplied and reinforced oppression in Ireland would become more difficult. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland might be able to face 20 or 30 of them; but let him wait till they were 70 or 100 strong. What was the case with regard to the Blacklion meeting? The case was this. It would have been extremely inconvenient to have sent soldiers and police to the place to prevent a breach of the peace. There never was the slightest chance of a breach of the peace, because there was no opposition Party in the district. It was a Catholic district, and the people were all of one mind. Blacklion was 10 miles by rail from Enniskillen, a garrison town in which there were Infantry and Dragoons, so that, without the slightest inconvenience, a full supply of soldiers, horse and foot, and also of police, could have been drafted down by railway on the morning of the meeting, and could have returned safely the same evening. He mentioned these facts as an illustration of the absurdly false information supplied by the Resident Magistrates, and of the means by which the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary for Ireland suppressed the right of freedom of speech in Ireland. One of the Resident Magistrates who appeared in Blacklion on that occasion, a Mr. Boulby, appeared a few days ago at a meeting where anti-Irish songs were sung, and that was the sort of gentleman on whose representations, he supposed, the Government suppressed the Blacklion meeting. He (Mr. Biggar) was refused an opportunity of addressing his constituents at that place, and some of his supporters insisted upon taking a private room in which he could address them. He did not wish to use strong language towards the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but he did not think he ever used a word that was sufficiently strong to mark his sense of the right hon. Gentleman's conduct in regard to the Blacklion meeting. Then, again, there was the Coote Hill meeting in County Cavan. Coote Hill was also a Catholic district, and it was a place where a murder took place. He did not believe the Government took any efforts to find out the perpetrators of the murder on that occasion of the unfortunate boy M'Guire. The Government would not give compensation to his relatives for his death, as they would have done unquestionably had he belonged to the favoured Party. What was the reason that the Coote Hill meeting was proclaimed? Because, he (Mr. Biggar) presumed, as there were to be two Orange meetings at Dromore, it would have been impossible for the Orangemen to make a decent show at both meetings, and the Lord Lieutenant proclaimed the Coote Hill meeting, so that the Orangemen could be drafted to Dromore on purpose to make a large show at one place. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland denied that there had been any interference with freedom of speech in Ireland. Why, he would not allow him (Mr. Biggar) on two different occasions to address the electors of the county which he had the honour to represent, electors whose confidence he had every reason to believe he possessed. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the case of Hallissey, and he made a most curious admission. He told the Committee that this man was "Boycotted," and that the Government had given him protection. The right hon. Gentleman called Hallissey an honest man; Hallissey, who was a convicted perjurer, and who was a thorough scoundrel, was, according to the dictum of the right hon. Gentleman, an honest man, simply because he told a flood of falsehoods to the right hon. Gentleman, and had given opportunities to the right hon. Gentleman to vilify the Irish people. Hallissey was a broken-down character; he was getting relief from the Poor Law Guardians before any "Boycotting" took place. He put himself in communication with the police; he became an informer, and did his best to get up fictitious charges. Such was the gentleman who was the confidential friend of the right hon. Gentleman. What he had said was an illustration of the way in which informers were originated in Ireland, and of the way in which the people were governed. With regard to the imposition of the police tax, his hon. Friends had impressed upon the attention of the Irish people what he thought was a very meritorious thing—namely, the holding out against the payment of this blood tax. The police tax was one of the many dishonest taxes the people were called upon to pay. The people who imposed it knew that it was not an honest tax, and no argument could possibly be advanced for its imposition. The people were bound, in their own interest and in the interest of right, to protest against the continuance of the tax by the only forcible way in their power—namely, by not paying it. Reference had been made to the question whether or not people did pay a dishonest levy, and he was disposed to think that there were illustrations in this country of classes of people refusing to pay dishonest levies. Quakers allowed their goods to be distrained upon for what they regarded as dishonest levies, and there was also the case of the tithe-payers, who refused to pay further extra taxation in respect of hops. It was not looked upon as unreasonable in this country to protest against taxes of an unfair and dishonest nature. From the same point of view, he thought the Irish people were perfectly justified in refusing to pay this blood money; and he hoped they would, in every district, combine against its imposition. It suited Earl Spencer exceedingly well, because he belonged to the landlord class, and he wanted entirely to play into the hands of the landlords, whether the landlords were right or wrong. Some people might say that Lord Spencer belonged to a political Party; but his (Mr. Biggar's) experience went to make him believe that, in principle, there was no difference between Liberals and Conservatives, except that one sat on one side of the House and one on the other. Earl Spencer hated the Irish people——

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cavan that there is no reference in this Vote to any of the questions which he is now discussing; he certainly will not be in Order in discussing, under this Vote, the conduct of the Viceroy.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it was avowed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that all these objectionable things were done upon the advice of this Captain Plunkett and his *confrères;* and his (Mr. Biggar's) object was to show that Earl Spencer and these disreputable magistrates combined together to victimize the unfortunate people of Ireland, to lay heavy taxes on them, and in other ways to misgovern the country. He wished to show that Earl Spencer and the Chief Secretary for Ireland were insidiously playing into the hands of outrages and disreputable characters.

The CHAIRMAN: I must again point out to the hon. Gentleman that he is travelling beyond the limits of the Vote. In the first place, let me say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has not spoken on this Vote at all; therefore the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cavan cannot be in Order in replying to any remarks the Chief Secretary for Ireland has made in a previous debate. The references the hon. Gentleman has lately made have no connection whatever with the Vote before the Committee.

Mr. BIGGAR assumed he should have an opportunity of hearing the Chief Secretary for Ireland reply to his statement, and that he would have an opportunity of replying to the right hon. Gentleman. In the meantime, he begged to move that the Committee be counted.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. KENNY said, he apprehended that the Vote now before the Committee opened up considerably weightier questions than the mere conduct of Captain Plunkett. Captain Plunkett was merely one of a quartette of similar gentlemen who, as far as they possibly could, had been endeavouring to thwart the cause of popular loyalty in Ireland. Reference had been made, at considerable length, to the conduct of Captain Plunkett with regard to Hallissey the blacksmith. He (Mr. Kenny) had been astonished that the Government failed to procure for Hallissey employment which it had invariably procured for all its other instruments in Ireland; the different persons who came forward in all the capacities of informers were invariably handsomely rewarded by Her Majesty's Government. Nothing would seem simpler to him than that Her Majesty's Government should establish a position in Dublin Castle, such as a shoer of horses, which would suit Hallissey admirably. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), in attempting to defend the conduct of Captain Plunkett, no doubt, spoke from material which was supplied in common to himself and other officials in Dublin Castle. So far as he (Mr. Kenny) could gather from the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, to which he had listened throughout with considerable attention, he could only come to the conclusion that he made the conduct and character of Captain Plunkett appear considerably worse than some of the Irish Members would appear to consider it was. He would like to give the hon. and learned Gentleman a little advice, or, in other words, refer him to a little incident which occurred during the famous Mid Lothian campaign. The right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister, in one of his speeches, said he had received that morning, amongst other telegrams, a telegram which he would read to the meeting. The telegram was from the Rev. William Sharman, of Plymouth. The Prime Minister said he did not know Mr. Sharman, and therefore the meeting must take it as he got it; but, in his opinion, the nature of the telegram was such that it must be substantially true. The telegram was as follows:—

> "Sir Hardinge Giffard stated last night in my hearing that you were in favour of giving back Gibraltar, and that you entered into negotiations for its surrender."

THE CHAIRMAN: The remarks of the hon. Member have no reference to the Vote before the Committee. He must confine himself to the Vote.

MR. KENNY said, he was proceeding to point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland that the character of his observations in defence of Captain Plunkett were of so weak a nature that, instead of securing or attaining the ends he (Mr. Kenny) presumed the hon. and learned Gentleman had in view, in vindicating Captain Plunkett, it really made it appear considerably worse, and he was about to express the opinion of the Prime Minister as to Solicitor Generals. The reply which the Prime Minister returned to Mr. Sharman was—"Errors, pardonable in private persons, are scandalous in Solicitor Generals." The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland was a new Member of the House, and this advice from his Chief might be an advantage to him. And now he (Mr. Kenny) had to direct himself to certain occurrences in Ireland in which he was personally concerned, and brought into contact with some of the magistracy that served under the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in Ireland. He referred to the suppression of meetings in County Clare, one in the town of Milltown, near which he lived, and another in Ennis, which he represented in Parliament. At the first of these places a meeting was announced to be held, at which he and the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) would deliver addresses. There had not been a meeting in the town for a year; but, six months previous to the meeting held there, in 1882, a murder was committed in the district. The meeting in 1882 was addressed by the then hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy); and between 1882 and the date of the meeting he (Mr. Kenny) was announced to address, in conjunction with his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow, there had been no outrage of a serious character in the district. There had only been two or three in the parish during the whole time, and these consisted of alleged threatening letter-writing, and it was generally understood in the place itself that those who received the threatening letters wrote them. In the next parish there had been an outrage; the hay-rick of a clergyman had been set on fire; but this clergyman was held in general respect in the neighbourhood, and suspicion pointed to the fact that the outrage was committed by a person living 40 or 50 miles away. The police arrested a certain person staying in the locality, a respectable man of good position; but before the magistrate the charge could not be substantiated, and the man was dismissed. No suspicion attached to any resident as being concerned in the matter. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had not at any time given any reason whatever why this meeting was suppressed. There was no apprehension of disturbance, for the people were unanimous; there was no opposition; but representations were made by the local wire-pullers to the local magistrates, of course these were connived at by the magistrate at Ennis, the senior magistrate for County Clare; and, on the representations made to Dublin Castle, this meeting was suppressed. Mrs. Maroney was the principal landowner of the district, and was notorious for harsh treatment of her tenants. She could bring her influence to bear upon four or five magistrates to do anything she wished. It so happened that the special magistrate at Milltown, who had satisfied himself of the peaceful character of the district, had got the soldiers removed, a serious thing for Mrs. Maroney, who was realizing a profitable rent from their presence. By her influence the meeting was proclaimed, though the Resident Magistrate had advised against this being done. The Hon. De Vere Perry was the magistrate at the time; but the meeting was prohibited, and in two months the Hon. De Vere Perry was dismissed. Now, the meeting was largely attended, there were some 10,000 people; but how were the people informed that the meeting was prohibited? He had left Milltown to go to Ennis to meet his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), who was going to address the meeting, instead of the hon. Member for Mallow; and he knew nothing about the proclamation until he was informed, by telegraph at Ennis, that after dark the policemen were stealing round like thieves to post up the notices of prohibition. So the authorities connived at the bringing of the people into the district where armed policemen only needed the slightest word to have at them. Passing from that, he would refer to the meeting at which he was announced to address his constituents at Ennis, where it was also announced the hon. Members for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) and Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) would speak. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had already stated that the reason for the proclamation of the Ennis meeting was the prevalance of crime in the district. So far as the town was concerned, the right hon. Gentleman did not deny that it was peaceable. There had been a murder in the streets two months before, having nothing to do with agrarianism, and which Dublin Castle must have satisfied itself was the crime of a drunken man, who was in the service of a landlord, and who was sentenced to penal servitude, when another man would have been hanged. Another bailiff attempted to commit suicide. But the ingenuity of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not to be baffled—he included not only Ennis, but the country 10 miles round, and on this founded a claim to prevent him addressing his constituents. The day before the meeting he found published in *The Freeman's Journal* another reason, to which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not alluded—the un-Parliamentary nature of the placard convening the meeting. But he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what was there objectionable in it? It was a simple announcement of the meeting, and wound up with "God save Ireland," and presented no reason for preventing a Member from addressing his constituents. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had distinguished himself more than once in preventing Members addressing their constituents. He had so prevented the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and for Cavan; but those three hon. Members represented counties; and if shut out from one place might speak in another, while the Representative of a small borough like Ennis, being silenced at a meeting, could find no other platform from which to address his constituents. He looked forward to an explanation of this incident with considerable interest; and he wished to say, furthermore, that whatever might be the response of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, he (Mr. Kenny) would take another opportunity of addressing his constituents, and he proposed, in conjunction with the same hon. Gentlemen who were previously announced, to seek some opportunity, and the right hon. Gentleman would have another opportunity of putting his Coercion Act into force. Who sent a Petition for preventing the meeting? Why was it said—"If it were not for your meetings, we should have no trouble in getting our rents?" It was an unfortunate thing that the Chief Secretary for Ireland gauged the condition of the country by remarking how the rents were paid. If they were paid well, then the state of the country was satisfactory; if badly, then the country was in a very bad state——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member for Ennis that his remarks on the Chief Secretary's policy have no reference whatever to the Vote. They would apply very well to a discussion which took place four or five hours ago; but they have no reference to the Vote at all now.

MR. KENNY said, he would pass from the subject with this remark—he was, no doubt, out of Order in referring to the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he should have mentioned special magistrates. They advised the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and it was because of the fact that they were his advisers, deluding him into error, that he had referred to the right hon. Gentleman. He was perfectly certain that if the right hon. Gentleman understood the real state of the facts, and had not to rely on second-hand information from biassed sources, he would not have acted as he had. A favourite device of these magistrates was, wherever they could, to get extra police drafted into a district. The police magistrates themselves, on those occasions, acted, to a great extent, on the advice of the sergeants of police and others. Into districts perfectly peaceful extra police had been drafted, all on the recommendation of a local policeman, who had certain personal objects to gain by it. In one instance a police hut was erected in a very peaceful part of Clare, near the town of Castlemaine, to protect a man named Gardner, who had made himself obnoxious in the district. After the hut had been there two months it was found to be altogether unnecessary; but at the end of six months, as the result of a new arrangement between Gardner and the Constabulary, the hut was re-erected. Now, Gardner was a man having no reason to apprehend personal danger. He alleged that a calf belonging to him had been killed maliciously, though it was believed by the people of the district that the animal died, it having no marks of violence. Gardner tried to secure compensation; and, on his mere allegation, five men were sent to guard Gardner, prejudging the case with a vengeance. The gain to this man was some £20 or £30; he received a ground rent of something like £10 a-year, and, in addition, he supplied the police by contract with certain necessaries. Now, if this man required protection at all, it was only in the night time, and one or two policemen would have been sufficient to guard him; and yet, on the recommendation of a local policeman, the police magistrate of the district had seen his way to order the erection of a police hut in that district, at the cost of some hundreds of pounds. Of course, it was said, the expense did not fall upon any particular district; but his experience was that it fell upon the very smallest districts. There was another feature in the conduct of local magistrates, and it was the manner in which the blood tax had been levied. The tax had been levied in the most reckless fashion; but on account of the lateness of the hour (3-30) he would not enter at any length upon this branch of the question. He would, however, point out one instance in which, in a small district, the blood tax had been placed upon every person but the one upon whom it should have been placed, the only exception made, in he cases he had in mind, was that of Mr. Mahoney. This woman had been excluded from the penalty, although others, who, of course, could be in no way concerned in outrages, were subjected to the imposition. His own father, for instance, paid in blood tax £8 10*s.* a-year; and another man he knew, who had no possible connection with outrage, was required to pay £7 10*s.* He considered that was a most scandalous and infamous case; and the imposition of such taxes, instead of putting down crime, was only calculated to promote it. There was another point to which he wished to refer, and that was the question of the levying of the police tax. He thought that wherever extra police were drafted into any district, and where it could be shown—indeed, he did not think it could be shown in any district—that extra police were required, the people should, in all instances, refuse to be taxed in respect of the police quartered upon them. It was lamentable to see the enormous way in which taxation had been increased in Ireland within the last two or three years. Last year, in the county of Galway, the increase of taxation on account of the extra police drafted there at the instigation of the County Court magistrates was something like £6,000. In one county, over which Plunkett Pasha ruled, taxation for extra police had been increased by £10,000, and the same thing prevailed all over the country. The police force had been increased by something like 10,000 or 15,000 men, without the slightest show of necessity. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had left his place in the House; but before the discussion closed, he (Mr. Kenny) would like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman what were the reasons for his extraordinary, arbitrary, and utterly unjustifiable conduct towards the Irish Representatives when they went down amongst their constituents. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman's explanation would not be of the unsatisfactory character it had been up to now, and that it would be of such a nature that it would bear the examination of reasonable men.

Mr. LEAMY said, he did not intend to occupy the attention of the Committee for more than one or two moments; he rose merely for the purpose—["Oh, oh!"] He had not, up to then, troubled the Committee, and he thought that, when he rose to submit a practical question to the Government, as he did now, it was rather too bad that he should be met with jeers from hon. Members opposite. That, however, was his experience; Irish Members, who did not speak often, were jeered at when they rose; but when they were in the habit of speaking, and rose to occupy the attention of the House or Committee, they were respected. He rose merely for the purpose of asking a question of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker). He found now that they were asked to pass a Vote of £2,103 for the salaries and allowances of the County Court magistrates in Ireland, and in the Estimate there appeared a note to the effect that "the above salaries are in excess of the rate authorized by the Act, 37 and 38 Vic. c. 23." By the 2nd section of that Act, which was passed in April, 1874, it was provided that magistrates in Ireland should be paid by way of salary, which salaries were specified. He now had to ask whether the salaries of magistrates, having been fixed by Act of Parliament, it was competent for a Committee of the House of Commons to increase those salaries until the Act of Parliament had been repealed? This was purely a legal question, and he desired information on the point from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, that the question the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Leamy) had put was reasonable enough. The salaries of certain magistrates were fixed by Act of Parliament, he believed at £675 a-year. Four additional magistrates were appointed in October last upon a different system, and upon a different scale of payment; their salaries were fixed at £1,000 a-year, and it was because their salaries were above the sum fixed by Act of Parliament that the Government had come to the Committee with this Vote.

Mr. LEAMY said, it must be remembered, however, that there was an Act of Parliament which stated that every magistrate should be paid a certain salary; and he wanted to know on what authority magistrates had been appointed and increased salaries had been given them? There was not a Member present who would say for one moment that the Committee had a right to pass anything by way of increase of salary of any County Court magistrate in Ireland, when the salary was fixed and appointed by Statute. He desired something more in the nature of a legal explanation than the statement they had received from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. Of course, he knew that the hon. and learned Gentleman could not, for a moment, suppose that he (Mr. Leamy) meant anything disrespectful to him in the matter. The hon. and learned Gentleman was only a new Member of the House, and possibly was not fully conversant with the particulars of the Vote; but there was the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) present, and surely the Committee had a right to receive the best information it could from the highest Legal Authorities in the House upon the question which he now put. Here was a statement made on the Estimates, that the sum they were asked to pay was a sum in excess of the sum they were authorized to pay by Act of Parliament. In the face of an Act of Parliament, authorizing a certain rate of payment, what right had the Committee to pay a sum in excess of that rate? He maintained that the Committee had no such right, and that they would be acting illegally if they passed the proposed excess. The answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland did not explain the matter at all. Why did the Government consider it necessary to make a statement on the Vote that the salary they were now defending was in excess of the rate authorized by Act of Parliament? If they had a perfect right to demand the increase, there was no necessity to make that statement at all. He did not know whether it would be discourteous to appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, seeing that he had not been upon the Treasury Bench throughout the whole of the discussion, to give the Committee some explanation of the matter; but he was persuaded this was a question which demanded an answer from a very high legal authority. Suppose the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, were to come down to-night, and, instead of asking for a sum of £2,000, asked for £20,000, with which to increase the salaries of these County Court magistrates, was he (Mr. Leamy) to be told that it would depend upon the will of the Committee whether the salaries were increased or not?

MR. COURTNEY said, that matter was really one of well-settled authority. The salaries of magistrates were defined by Act of Parliament. It was true that the Committee could not, by its own act, overrule that Act of Parliament; but the authority of the Committee was only the first stage in the preparation of another Act of Parliament; and if the Vote of the Committee supported the payment of a salary different to that provided by a former Act, the Vote was subsequently embodied in another Act—the Appropriation Act. The Appropriation Act was perfectly valid, and it settled the new salary, although that new salary might differ from one previously decided upon. The matter had been very carefully considered, and the step now taken was found to be quite legitimate.

MR. LEAMY said, he was obliged to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury for his explanation; but it appeared to him that the position they were in was this—that a proposition was made to-night which every hon. Member in the House regarded as one on a par with any other proposition made in Committee—namely, that the Vote did not require a subsequent Act of Parliament to secure its validity.

MR. COURTNEY observed, that no Vote was complete until it was embodied in an Act of Parliament.

MR. LEAMY said, he did not affect to be acquainted with financial law; he thought there was only one kind of law, the law made by a Parliament and not by the Treasury. It was strikingly unfair and improper to alter Acts of Parliament in the manner suggested by the hon. Gentleman; and he desired to know whether it was a custom often adopted? Let him take, for instance, the case of the Land Act. Certain salaries were appointed to be paid, and certain Judges were appointed, who were to receive those salaries. Would the hon. Gentleman tell him that if there was a desire on the part of the Government to increase the salaries of any of the Judges, or of the Sub-Commissioners, he would put down in the Votes a sum for the increase of such salaries, and he would merely add a note that that was a sum in excess of that authorized by the Act of Parliament? Of course, the hon. Gentleman dared not do anything of the kind; if he did, he (Mr. Leamy) would like to know what would be the language held by hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. It was because the Irish were only a small Party, and it was because the hon. Gentleman knew that every measure sought by the Government would be supported by the mechanical following of the Government, irrespective of its merits, that he had not hesitated to put down this sum to-night, and ask the House to vote it away. The hon. Gentleman had very courteously replied to him, and he, of course, did not hold the hon. Gentleman responsible in the matter; others were responsible for this Vote. But what he wanted to know was this—that if he, or some of his hon. Friends, had not got up to raise this question, would the hon. Gentleman, who had sat through the Sabbath morning—would they have voted this sum of money; would they have gone away knowing that they had increased the salaries of these County Court magistrates, notwithstanding that there was an Act of Parliament fixing a proper salary; would they have thought they were merely passing a Vote in the ordinary way? The present was only another instance of the way Irish Members were dealt with by this intolerant and extravagant Irish Ministry. This Vote had been sprung upon the Committee.

MR. TREVELYAN rose to Order. He thought that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Leamy) should be asked to withdraw the expression that the Vote had been "sprung upon the Committee."

As a matter of fact, the Vote had been before the Committee for weeks, and there was a complete explanation on one side of the Paper.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the expression "sprung upon the Committee" was out of Order?

Mr. LEAMY submitted that the phrase "sprung upon the Committee" was one that was continually used.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the expression is not out of Order; but whether it is true or not is a different question.

Mr. LEAMY said, if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland wished to contest the point, he might do so; but there was no use in dealing with English Members, even those below the Gangway. If they were above the Gangway, they might accept their statements; but when he saw the way in which they acted, especially the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who was such a champion of liberty, except when it came home to himself, he could not pay much regard to them. He wished to put it to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General whether it was possible to go outside the Act of Parliament, which fixed the salaries to be paid to Resident Magistrates, by a Vote in Committee? He could not be satisfied with the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because this was a new kind of procedure and practice; but he would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland whether, in the face of the Act of Parliament fixing the salaries, this course could be adopted?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that after being in the House for several hours, and when he was very tired, the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Leamy), who had generally treated him with courtesy, suddenly attacked him, and asked why his Colleagues did not throw him over? That he thought was rather too strong. The real fact of the matter was that this Vote was far from having been sprung on the House. It was a Vote which carried out, in a perfectly legal manner, a course of policy which had been explained to the House as long ago as last year. When he and Lord Spencer went to Ireland they found certain machinery for preserving law and order through the Resident Magistrates. That system was effective; but it erred in two respects. In the first place, it was a very expensive arrangement; and, in the next place, it confused the functions of the magistrates and the police, and placed over the police a class of officers who had great powers as magistrates. They, accordingly, determined to alter the system into a form which would be more satisfactory in a legislative and judicial aspect. That was no small object in their eyes; but it was demanded by the necessity of supervising law and order in the country. Therefore, last year, they introduced a Bill which had a good many objects, among which was the setting up of divisional Commissions. The Bill was opposed on account of that, and other provisions, and therefore the Bill was withdrawn. He regretted that, because the great reduction of expenditure which their proposal would have brought about could not be effected; and he was also sorry that hon. Gentlemen who were always making charges against the Government on account of the salaries of officials in Ireland did not co-operate with the Government. He was sorry that several of the proposals in that Bill could not be carried out; but there was one which, in a modified form, could be carried out, and that was one which greatly reduced the salaries of the Resident Magistrates, and, at the same time, modified their functions and rendered them more satisfactory. In place of the Resident Magistrates, the Lord Lieutenant appointed four divisional magistrates, who received very much smaller salaries and allowances; but on precisely the same footing as the Resident Magistrates. The Lord Lieutenant reduced the powers below those of the Resident Magistrates, and the result of this proceeding, which was perfectly legal, was to greatly reduce the expenditure—from, in fact, £17,000 a-year to £7,200. The business of the country was, he believed, better organized now than when it was under the Resident Magistrates, and the gain to the country had been between £9,000 and £10,000 a-year. That was his explanation.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had looked for some adequate reply to the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy); but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had confined himself to considerations which influenced the Government in making certain changes. He left altogether untouched the legal objection taken by the hon. Member. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) was a little more a rash, and, instead of leaving to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland the task of defending the position of the Government upon this legal point, he gallantly rose to the charge. The argument he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) wished to put forward was that the Act 37 & 38 *Vict.* contained a retrospective clause, in express terms, limiting the sum to be paid to Resident Magistrates in Ireland, and that it would necessarily follow that a Vote of this House would repeal this Act. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), however, traversed the contention of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, and held that a clause of that kind must be repealed in express terms, or by such implication as must be obvious. But with regard to the matter of fact, his contention in reply to the hon. Gentleman was that the Appropriation Act had nothing to do with rates of pay. It simply appropriated to certain services, described in general terms, certain sums of money, and did not fix the rates of pay. A Court of Law would not recognize the Estimates, and there was nothing in the Appropriation Act to support the contention of the hon. Gentleman. Therefore, the argument of the hon. Member for Waterford remained untouched. Here was an Act of Parliament which expressly limited the maximum pay of magistrates. His hon. Friend said they would require equal authority to increase the amount, and the Financial Secretary to the Treasury trusted to the Appropriation Act, which, however, was quite inadequate, as he had shown.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that was the first time he had ever discussed or risen to answer a legal question at 4 o'clock in the morning. The statement of his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) was quite correct. They must go to the Estimate to see that the Appropriation Act did not go beyond the Estimate, and in that way they had a check which was perfectly legal. There was nothing new in what the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had stated. The process of Supply was completed by the passing of an Act of Parliament embodying the Votes, and that would be a legal alteration of the salaries under consideration.

MR. LEAMY said, there was another question he would like to ask—namely, whether it was competent to this Committee to vote the salary of a man who had no salary by Act of Parliament—say, £1,000 a-year?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was not competent to the Committee to vote a salary of £1,000 a-year as a salary; but it was competent to them to vote a specific sum of money.

MR. LEAMY said, there was no indication respecting the question of salaries. There was nothing here to indicate that this sum was to be given for six months. It was true there was an Act of Parliament fixing the salary which the County Court magistrates were to receive. Would it, he asked, be competent for the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to come to Parliament and say, "I want a Vote of £1,000 for Judge O'Hagan, in addition to the salary he now has;" and would it be competent for the Committee to pass such a Vote?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it would be competent to vote any Judge a specific sum. He could assure hon. Gentlemen there would be ample opportunity afforded them for discussing any sum of money given to one person.

MR. SEXTON said, that no doubt the point was very clear in the hon. and learned Gentleman's (the Attorney General's) own mind; but he (Mr. Sexton) knew what Irishmen would think tomorrow about this very smart financial device which had been so suddenly brought to light. He had little doubt also as to what honest Englishmen would think about this transaction. By an Act of Parliament which appeared on the Statute Book, the salaries of certain magistrates were fixed. Every Act of Parliament, as they knew, passed through various stages in the House of Commons; they then were taken up to the House of Lords; and then, after passing that House, they received the Assent of the Crown. All these proceedings were taken in order that the subjects might receive the serious and deliberate attention of both Houses of Parliament. Last year the Government introduced a Bill in the House of Lords to increase the salaries of Resident Magistrates. The Bill, however, encountered such opposition in the House of Commons that the Government were unable to pass it. They found here, at the foot of the page, in surprisingly small type, a note which certainly had not attracted his attention, and which he did not hesitate to say was unnoticed by 19-20ths—the Government had endeavoured, by a simple line of type, to escape the effect of their defeat last year, and to escape the examination and scrutiny which would be given to a Bill regularly introduced into Parliament. He asserted that this amounted to an attempt to hoodwink the Representatives of the people. It amounted to a device to extract from the House of Commons a Vote for the expenditure of public money without enabling the House to understand what was before it. It amounted to an attempt to get the Committee to pass this Estimate without their knowing that the salaries of magistrates were fixed by Act of Parliament. It would thus be seen how public money was filched away by a device which was nothing else but an attempt to obtain, by a side wind, and by a delusive and discreditable course, money which could only have been regularly and constitutionally obtained by the passing of an Act of Parliament. He presented the Government with their own proposition. When the question came to be understood by the general body of the House, and more especially by financial critics, he had not the least doubt the Government would be compelled to withdraw part of this Estimate, and to fall back upon the course which they unsuccessfully attempted last year —namely, to introduce a Bill. If they wanted to pay a higher salary to their instruments in Ireland, they must pay that higher salary by the only mode which was recognized in law. He should not delay the Committee in considering the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker). He (Mr. Sexton) had hoped that before this the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have felt called upon to offer some further reply. The speeches of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and of the Solicitor General for Ireland had been compared to those of two lawyers—that of the Chief Secretary appeared to be a speech of a man who had read his brief; while that of the Solicitor General appeared to be the speech of a lawyer who had only taken a peep at his brief, when he came into Court. The hon. and learned Gentleman hoped that nothing would be said to cause the Lord Lieutenant to forego his merciful intention to remit the police tax in the case of Hallissey. He (Mr. Sexton) despised that threat. Whenever Irish Members spoke openly and inconveniently of Irish grievances, they were told that, if they continued to do so, certain inconvenient results might follow. Inconvenient results had followed their plain speaking; but those results had never induced them to hesitate for an instant. They would continue, upon every occasion, to say in the House of Commons what they considered to be desirable and necessary in the public interest, without regard to how it might affect themselves and others. A second reason why he disregarded the threat of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General was that the people of Ireland were now in a resolute mood, and he believed they would take the word of advice which had been given them to-night. He believed they would feel and understand that the safety of their rights and the integrity of their homes were not so concerned in the recovery of the police tax as they were in the payment of rack rents. If the Government persisted much longer in imposing a tax which was alien to the spirit of civilization, which was a disgrace to Constitutional rule, which was not required by the circumstances of Ireland, they would find themselves in a net of difficulty from which extrication might not be easy. He charged the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General for Ireland with suppressing a material fact. The imposition of this tax had occurred in districts almost crimeless. He referred the Chief Secretary for Ireland to his own language of a recent date; he referred the right hon. Gentleman to his own admission that the state of Ireland with regard to crime was a state which would not be discreditable to any country in the world; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman why, in the face of his own admission, did the Government obstinately and blindly insist upon the imposition of police and blood taxes which could only be tolerable and conceivable in countries barbarously governed in the mediæval ages of the world? They had asked why Captain Plunkett arrested the public leaders of the people, but they had received no reply. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland made a weak attempt to shield Captain Plunkett, by transferring to the Government of Dublin Castle the onus of the suppression of public meetings. He (Mr. Sexton), however, remembered a remarkable declaration which was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland only the other day. Speaking upon the question of the suppression of public meetings, the right hon. Gentleman said there never was a meeting announced in Ireland for the purpose of discussing politics from a popular standpoint that the Government were not recommended and implored by some body of persons to suppress it. He (Mr. Sexton) had no doubt that Captain Plunkett belonged to the body of persons to whom the right hon. Gentleman referred. He could assure the Chief Secretary for Ireland that if the Government had acted towards Captain Plunkett as he deserved, it would have been quite possible to hold quiet and peaceable meetings in Cork as it was in other parts of Ireland. Another grotesquely weak argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland was that proclamations of meetings in Ireland had frequently been delayed, because the Government had to consider the subject. They had been told already by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that when the Government suppressed meetings in County Cork they did so upon the advice of Captain Plunkett. They had been told that, whenever a meeting was suppressed, it was not suppressed because of circumstances suddenly arising, but because of well-known pre-existing facts. They had been told that meetings were suppressed, because two men jumped over a hedge; because a parish priest was evicted. All these facts were well known; and if this debate had made one thing clearer than another, it was that the reasons for the suppression of the meetings in Ireland were of a most nonsensical nature. It was ridiculous for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to state that the proclamations were delayed because the subject had to be considered. In the case of every meeting proclaimed in Cork, the facts alleged by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as the reasons for the suppressions were known to Captain Plunkett and to the Government, in some cases months, and in other cases weeks, before the meetings were announced. Captain Plunkett had the telegraph wires at his service; he had only to telegraph from his palace in Cork to the Lord Lieutenant's palace in Dublin, and everything was settled. He (Mr. Sexton) repeated the accusation made at the opening of the debate, that the Government and Captain Plunkett knew, days and weeks before, the cases upon which they relied. They delayed the proclamations until the eve of the meetings, until the very days upon which the meetings were held, and for what reason? For no other reason but that the people might be allowed to assemble on the scene; that they might be allowed to protest, perhaps to revolt; and that, therefore, Plunkett Pasha, the great terror of the Southern Provinces, might be able to relieve the tedious ways of civil rule; that he might be able to apply to the people the means of violence and force. As to the blacksmith Hallissey, the Government appeared to find him a white elephant. He (Mr. Sexton) had no doubt they would find they had obtained an evil legacy in this blacksmith. For the sake of this disreputable creature, who had given up the attempt to earn an honest livelihood, who had become a riotous person, who thought, like others, he could take up with advantage the trade of informer—for the sake of this creature they had tormented a poor pastoral and hard-working community; for the sake of this creature they continued to persecute honest peasantry, and had made to them the extraordinary and unparalleled proposal that, unless they subscribed to send the man out of the country, they must be content to lie under a heavy burden. Let England continue this tax a little longer; they would find that, as they had to abandon the imposition of Church rates on Quakers in this country, and tithes in

Ireland, they would have to forego this police tax as repugnant to all civilized law, as one against which the public conscience revolted, and as one which could not be sustained. He was certain that if the Government had no moral sense of the enormity of what they were doing; if their consciences would not induce them to pause in their attempt to force the tax on the people, they would, to their meanness, add the disgrace of failure.

MR. HEALY said, he could now understand why the Government were so anxious to snatch this Vote that night. It was said it was absolutely necessary to thrust it down the throats of the Committee at 2 o'clock on Sunday morning; and now he found the Vote concealed a thing of which the Government might well feel ashamed. Thanks to the acumen of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy), it was now seen why the Government were so anxious; and if this discussion had not been continued the Government would have obtained that power by a side wind which they never could get openly. The Bill of last Session was vehemently opposed by Irish Members; but it was now attempted to gain the power to give these salaries under a Vote of Supply. The logic of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General was extraordinary; he said, perfectly truly, that if the Vote of the Committee was followed by the Appropriation Act, it would legalize the payments to these gentlemen. That was logical, and no one could contest it; it was an impregnable position; but what happened? The Appropriation Act was only for a year, and then its power lapsed; but the Police Bill proposed that these satraps should be perpetual. Was it proposed to make these salaries perpetual? ["No, no!"] The right hon. Gentleman opposite the Chancellor of the Exchequer dissented——

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I said this Vote would not make them perpetual.

MR. HEALY said, yes; but let there be an understanding on the general question. Was it proposed by the Government to make these salaries perpetual? Could the Government hope to obtain, in Committee, on Sunday morning, at half-past 4, the consent of Irish Members, who opposed the Bill of last year, to setting up four satraps in Ireland? They would continue to oppose the proposal—a proposal to give Captain Plunkett and his compatriots in crime propagation — salaries to afford the means for their continuance in Ireland. They had shown how, like cause and effect, these salaries had been followed by crime. Captain Plunkett desired the continuance of disorder in Ireland. The House had had recently a quotation from Edmund Burke, as to agitators living on disorder, and there was another party in Ireland which lived on disorder. How did Captain Plunkett obtain his extra salary? Were there peace in Ireland, would Captain Plunkett be worth his wages, or worth his salt? He was given extra salary for extra duty, and he had extraordinary duty because of extraordinary crime. And why the extra crime? Because of the putting down of peaceful meetings and encouragement to outrage. The Government had hoped to snatch this Vote in a surreptitious manner. It had been allowed it was unusual; let the precedents for it be shown in the House, and when their relevancy could be studied, and when leading Members of the Opposition were present, to bring their experience to bear on the proposal of the Government. Irish Members were not likely to have official experience, and they had nothing but the *ipse dixit* of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney), which they accepted as a statement bounded by his official position, and made under official stress, at half-past 4 in the morning. Contrast his statement, made in the heat of debate, with the cold light of precedent, and the actual facts of previous cases. However much they condemned the conduct of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; however much they condemned the practice of snatching, under lump sums for law charges in Ireland without sub-heads, particular Votes in connection with the Prevention of Crime Act investigations and informers, they did not expect from him that he would attempt to get by a Supplementary Vote that which was ignominiously withdrawn in a Bill last Session. If this Vote was not intended to be snatched rapidly from the House, why put it in the nature of a Supplementary Vote?

They all knew the usual character of Supplementary Estimates; that they were of a special description, supposed to be necessitated by some circumstance of peculiar urgency. What was the special urgency of the salary of Captain Plunkett? Could he not wait another year, or until the general Estimates came on? Were Members to have dust thrown in their eyes, because Captain Plunkett was in a hurry to draw his extra salary? Was Captain Plunkett in receipt of this extra salary? The Committee were frequently told—"You must vote the money now, because it is already spent." Had Captain Plunkett received his extra salary? There was no answer. Cancel the extra portion of this Vote. It could be brought in next year. If Captain Plunkett was suffering from the want of it, help him from the Secret Service money. A more extraordinary proposition he never heard of than, on a Sunday morning, to ask the Committee to adopt a Vote perfectly illegal and unconstitutional. There had been an explanation that explained nothing; there had been a statement from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General that the Vote was legal when passed; but it was not passed, and was not legal yet; therefore this unprecedented Vote was unconstitutional. He might be told other Votes were not legal until the Act was passed; but, at least, the Government had precedent and custom on which to base their practice. This Vote was put forward without any statement, until one was wrung from the Government by the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy). Did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland think that, if he were proposing, say, a Navy Vote of an entirely novel character, between 2 and 5 on a Sunday morning, that it would not be stoutly resisted by such Members as the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and Portsmouth (Mr. T. C. Bruce) and others? But because Irish Members had not the support of public opinion, the right hon. Gentleman ventured on a proposal of this kind. He (Mr. Healy) ventured to say the Government would rue the day they tried to snatch a Vote of this kind from the Irish Party. The proposal would have to pass through the Report stage, and when the Appropriation Bill came on, it would be fought through all its stages. Irish Members had no birds to shoot in August. He was surprised that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had led the Government into such a mess; he gained nothing by these mole-like methods of getting money. Instead of gaining, the Government would lose time; and the judgment of the whole country would condemn the attempt to snatch a Vote on Sunday morning.

MR. TREVELYAN said, in reference to the remarks lately made, he forgot, when he answered the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), that a good while ago he was asked, in reference to these additional magistrates, the names, districts, and pay. The hon. Member asked for a Return, and he (Mr. Trevelyan) said he was ready to state the names and districts——

MR. HEALY rose to Order. It would be in the recollection of the Chairman that earlier in the day a right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench raised a question of Order in reference to a remark made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt). He (Mr. Healy) was just informed that when he was remarking, in reference to the Appropriation Bill, that Irish Members had no birds to shoot in August, the hon. Member for Oldham, and he would name him, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, said "landlords"——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not allude to another hon. Member except by the name of the place he represents.

MR. HEALY said, he only wished to thoroughly identify him. While he was speaking, the hon. Member said "landlords," thereby imputing murder to hon. Members on that side. Was such a remark in Order, made across the floor of the House?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not understand the hon. Member made that observation in debate.

MR. HEALY said, that day the Speaker had ruled, when the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was stated to have said that a vote of the House was attempted to be carried by a "dirty trick," that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have made that statement. He (Mr. Healy) asked, was it in Order, was it to be tolerated, that the hon. Member for Oldham, always offensive to Irish Members, should shout across the floor, imputing murder to Irish Members?

The CHAIRMAN: So much depends on the manner, the way, the tone, in which it was said. If the hon. Member for Oldham had shouted it across the House, I should have heard it, and other hon. Members would have heard it. If he made the observation in confidence to an hon. Member beside him, it is not for me to judge. If it had been used in debate, I should have had an opportunity of judging, and should know how to act.

Mr. HEALY: I remember, Sir, on a former occasion, in the time of the late Speaker, when your ruling on a point of Order differed from the Speaker's, the Speaker was sent for, and consulted. The Speaker's ruling to-day, in my opinion, was distinctly different from yours on this, a similar question; and I respectfully ask that you now leave the Chair, as I have seen done before, in order that you consult Mr. Speaker on the point of Order as to whether the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) has a right to shout a charge of murder across the House.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not sufficiently aware of the Rules of the House; that is a Question that could not be put to the Committee. I am not aware in what way I have differed from the ruling of the Speaker. Neither am I aware that the Speaker has any power to reverse any ruling I may give as Chairman.

Mr. HEALY: For the purpose of testing the matter, and seeing that the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) has not had the courtesy to do what the Secretary of State for the Home Department thought it was best to do towards English Members this afternoon, I move that you leave the Chair for the purpose of consulting the Speaker.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): That would be quite unprecedented. The Chairman has given his decision. I was present when the Speaker gave his decision, and it was exactly in the same words as the Chairman's.

Mr. HEALY: Am I to understand that the present Leader of the House, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, will allow his followers to make a charge of this kind against the Irish Members, and that he will get up at the Table, and, without saying a word of condemnation of the charge, simply attempt to get the whole matter put aside?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, I am not to be browbeaten by language of that kind. I spoke quite temperately and quietly. All I said was that I was present when the Speaker ruled on the matter to which the hon. Member referred, and that the Speaker ruled precisely in the same words as the Chairman has ruled just now. It is not my business to make any representations to hon. Members as to whom there is no statement of what they said. All my business is to say that the Chairman has stated his ruling, and that his ruling is strictly accurate.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has just stated that your ruling was strictly accurate. The point on which you ruled was perfectly plain—namely, that the proposal that you should leave the Chair, in order that your ruling might be possibly overruled by the decision of the Speaker, was a proposal which could not be put from the Chair. Upon that, Sir, your ruling was most clear; but you have not yet ruled upon the much more important question which was brought to your notice by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). I heard the expression, and I heard it with amazement and indignation, not to say disgust. I was not certain who made use of the expression; but I believe it was made by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley). Since he has been charged with it, and has sat now for some minutes without any disclaimer, I am forced to conclude the charge is well founded. That charge is a serious one. The hon. Member has, by implication, charged us with the crime of murder.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member raise any other point of Order?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I am going to bring the point of Order to your notice.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member be so good as to put any new point of Order? The former one I have disposed of.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Which one?

The CHAIRMAN: The point of Order which was raised by the hon. Member for Monaghan.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I want to submit a point of Order in connection with that. I do not know, Sir, whether it is within your personal recollection—it will probably be in the recollection of many hon. Members now in the House—that last year I made an observation in a private conversation respecting another hon. Member of this House. A Gentleman sitting behind me overheard the observation, and thereupon brought it to the notice of the Speaker. The Speaker addressed himself to me—or, rather, called upon me to make such an explanation with regard to the observation as I thought necessary. He left the matter to me, with a very strong suggestion as to what I ought to do—namely, to withdraw the expression. I did withdraw the observation. Now, Sir, I take that as an authoritative ruling in a case very similar to the present. I imputed nothing to the hon. Member I referred to; but the private conversation was sufficiently loud for others sitting near to hear what was being said. The hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), however, shouted across the floor of the House; and, therefore, if anything, his offence is much more serious than mine was. I ask you, Sir, to adopt the course which the Speaker adopted on the occasion I have referred to.

The CHAIRMAN: The point in regard to the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) has been already determined. I have stated that if I had heard the expression, or if I had any reason to believe that he had made it in debate, I should not have had a moment's hesitation as to how I should have ruled. That has been determined, and I understood the hon. Member to rise to a new point of Order.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I rose, Sir, to bring under your notice the ruling of the late Speaker, Sir Henry Brand.

Mr. HEALY: Sir, as you have declined to reprove the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) in any way, I beg to give Notice that, on Monday next, I shall raise this question when the Speaker is in the Chair.

Mr. O'BRIEN: May I inquire, Sir, whether a Member on these Benches would have been at liberty to cry out "Liar!" in the hearing of the hon. Member for Oldham, though not addressing himself to the Chair?

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to state, for the information of the hon. Member, that if an observation of that kind were made, when I heard it I should know how to deal with it.

Mr. BIGGAR: I beg leave to move that you do now report Progress, and I do so for two reasons. The one is, that there should be an opportunity afforded of consulting the Speaker upon the point under discussion. In the last Parliament I made an objectionable remark, and Mr. Speaker Brand ruled that even improper expressions used in the Division Lobby came within the censure of the Chair. The other reason why I wish to report Progress is, that the Government should have an opportunity of considering their position with regard to this particular Vote. The Vote is of a most irregular character; and, in their own interest, I submit to them the desirability of considering their position between now and Monday, with the view of withdrawing the Vote entirely from the notice of the House. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) has said that if this Vote is persisted in by the Government, unpleasant discussions will arise on its future stages, and I may say that what has taken place with regard to this particular Vote will be a strong incentive to us to refuse to pass Estimates at a late hour of the night.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY: I wish to make a personal explanation. In the first place, it is quite correct that I did use the word "landlords" when the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) said that there was no occasion for him and his hon. Friends to go to shoot grouse in August. [Mr. Healy: I said birds.] Well, grouse or birds—they are much the same. First, let me say I do not impute, and do not imagine, that any hon. Members opposite have any desire, or ever would shoot a landlord or anyone else. I would rather identify the hon. Members' constituents than themselves with the word. I beg to withdraw the expression as it was heard, and hope hon. Member's will not think it applied to themselves. Hon. Members will understand that words which are in the nature of taunts are not always meant to be taken strictly; but, of course, if they are, they must be withdrawn.

Mr. SEXTON: I support the Motion of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar).

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) has already moved to report Progress once or twice this evening, and certainly he will not be in Order in making such a Motion now.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, that, in that event, he would move to report Progress. He considered the discovery made by his hon. Friend (Mr. Leamy) had completely altered the complexion of matters.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.—(*Mr. O'Brien.*)

Mr. COURTNEY said, he hoped the Committee would discuss the extremely important point which had been raised by the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy) a little longer. With respect to the supposed invalidity of what had been done, he pointed out that last year precisely the same thing happened. Votes were taken in excess of salaries fixed, and the matter was mentioned in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. That Committee recommended that, under the circumstances, a special note referring to the excess salaries should be inserted in the Supplementary Estimates. That had been done, and a note had been inserted in the Vote explaining matters. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had said he would fight this Vote at every stage. He hoped the hon. Member would not think it necessary to carry out his threat, because there had certainly been no sharp practice whatever on the part of the Government. He trusted that they would be allowed to take the Vote to-night, because, if thought necessary, the question could be further considered on the Report of Supply which was to be taken on Monday.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had the greatest possible respect for the opinion of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney); but neither he, nor the Public Accounts Committee could make law. What was done in the Appropriation Act? There was in the Appropriation Act, Schedule B, Part 14, Sub-head 31, a certain sum of money for the salaries and allowances and expenses of various County Court officers and magistrates in Ireland.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to stop the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor); but he would be more in Order if the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) would withdraw his Motion to report Progress. I could then put the Original Question, and the hon. Gentleman would be able to speak.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the words the Chairman had just read in proposing the Original Question were precisely the words which were in the Appropriation Act; and the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Courtney) would have the Committee suppose that those words would, by implication at least, repeal the express terms of an Act of Parliament.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that what he had stated was, that the terms of the Act of Parliament would be superseded by the terms of the Appropriation Act.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that that was precisely the point he disputed, for the reason that the amount put in the Appropriation Act Schedule was a sum of money under a certain heading, the words of which he had read. That money was distributed under 10 or 12 different sub-heads.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the Statute was merely an indication of what Parliament, at the time, considered should be the salary; but this might be increased for any year by the Appropriation Act based on an Estimate for a higher rate.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had avoided the point, that an application was made to Parliament to increase these salaries, but Parliament refused; and then the right hon. Gentleman took the matter into his own hands, and slipped in a Vote to give these salaries over the head of Parliament. He thought this was irregular, and on Monday he should have an opportunity of speaking upon this matter. He also wished to point out the general conduct of the administration of law in Ireland with regard to these Resident Magistrates, whom the Government had bribed to misconduct themselves.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made a reference to the subject to which he thought the right hon. Gentleman was about to reply.

MR. TREVELYAN said, a few weeks ago the hon. and learned Member had asked for the names of these officials, and he had then given their names and their districts; and about a month ago he had informed the House that the salaries were to be increased to the amount of £2,000 a-year for each, with allowances.

MR. KENNY said, the right hon. Gentleman's statement was substantially correct. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman's answer, the Government would decide to arrange these four districts in Ireland and appoint Resident Magistrates; but the right hon. Gentleman had not given them the names of the Resident Magistrates. However, that was not of much importance. He had moved for a Return which had been granted, and he hoped it would soon be in the hands of Members.

MR. DEASY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General for Ireland had carefully avoided the subject of the discussion. It had been pointed out that a large extra force of police had been quartered on the City of Cork, which was one of the most peaceable cities in the Island, and perhaps in the United Kingdom. The only duty they had to perform had been to keep jurors out of the Court at the Assizes.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the pay proposed in these Estimates was £1,000 a-year only. A much larger question was started than was raised in this question by the question of extra police.

MR. KENNY said, it was too late to make a speech to-night; but he had put a series of questions in connection with his own constituency without getting answers. He was quite willing to forego answers at the present time; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to give answers on the Report stage.

MR. BIGGAR called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the case of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. The Chief Secretary had stated that Mr. Clifford Lloyd had already had about six months' leave.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that the case of Mr. Clifford Lloyd is not in any way connected with this Vote.

MR. BIGGAR said, it was important to know whether any of this Vote was for Mr. Clifford Lloyd. Very likely part of it was for him. So far as he knew, part of this money was for him; but what he would like to know was, why Mr. Clifford Lloyd should have this leave of absence?

MR. TREVELYAN said, six months' leave of absence had already been given, and it was the intention of the Lord Lieutenant to extend that leave of absence to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, if it was desired for the Public Service, up to a period of two years. He had made inquiries with reference to Mr. Clifford Lloyd's pay, and he could assure the House that that gentleman had never drawn double pay for one single day. In answer to the hon. Member (Mr. Deasy), he had already found time during this discussion to write to Cork for very full and minute information concerning the extra police, and he had been careful to raise all the points upon which he desired full information. The new rates of pay proposed for Divisional Magistrates was £1,000 a-year, with no other allowance than those which they would draw as ordinary magistrates—£100. The Special Resident Magistrates drew extra remuneration £300, an allowance of £360 a-year, and forage £100. The great saving was in their staffs. Before this financial year closed he would lay on the Table a short Bill providing for the appointment of Divisional Magistrates.

MR. BIGGAR said, he would suggest that the Government should pay the debts of Mr. Clifford Lloyd in Ireland. He would not pay his debts, and he had no redeeming quality at all.

MR. SEXTON said, they would not prolong the discussion; but they proposed to divide against the Vote. He would like to know whether the Chairman intended to make a report to the Speaker of the circumstance in connection with the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley)? He might add that the apology of the hon. Member aggravated the offence.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have no intention of reporting the incident.

Original Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 59; Noes 7: Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 42.) [5.35 A.M.]

MR. BIGGAR said, he protested against the Resolutions being reported, because they were of a thoroughly unconstitutional character, and quite indefensible. He would not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing; but he protested against a system of forcing through illegal Votes by an unprincipled mechanical majority.

MR. HEALY said, in assenting to the Vote they held themselves free to give the Bill, when brought in, their earnest opposition.

MR. SEXTON said, as the Chairman had stated he would not report the incident in relation to the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), he (Mr. Sexton) would take an early opportunity of bringing the matter before the House. It was not, perhaps, a question of Privilege; but it was a serious and very grave offence, and aggravated by an apology by which the hon. Member transferred the insult to the constituents who sent Members to the House.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, if the expression had come from any other Member of the House he should have considered it singularly offensive; but, coming from the quarter it did, he did not think it was worthy of notice.

MR. BIGGAR said, in reference to this incident, he thought the hon. Member for Oldham's conduct particularly offensive. He would appeal to the Chairman to look up authentic precedents, to see if there was reason to reverse his ruling.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Six o'clock on Sunday morning
till Monday next.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXXXV.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

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When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4—Public Works Office, Ireland, 1380

Commons and Inclosure Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. James, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Cheetham*) [Bill 63]
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 12, 1308
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Elton*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" Debate adjourned

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(*The Lord President*)
l. Read 3ª * *Feb* 26 (No. 17)
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Dodson*) *Feb* 28 [Bill 120]
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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 12, 1271
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Elton*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 123, N. 41; M. 82 (D. L. 36)
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(*Mr. Anderson, Sir Frederick Milbank, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Passmore Edwards, Mr. Buchanan*) [Bill 26]
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Feb* 27, 51
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Tottenham*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Debate adjourned

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Deasy, Mr. J., *Cork*
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Dickson, Major A. G., *Dover*
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DICKSON, Mr. T. A., *Tyrone*
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DILKE, Right Hon. Sir C. W. (President of the Local Government Board), *Chelsea, &c.*
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DILLWYN, Mr. L. L., *Swansea*
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(*Mr. Hollond, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Pell*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 12, 1307 [Bill 46]

DIXON-HARTLAND, Mr. F. D., *Evesham*
Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Patronage), Res. 910, 925, 931, 941
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DODDS, Mr. J., *Stockton*
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DODSON, Right Hon. J. G. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Scarborough*
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Dublin Museum of Science and Art Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)
c. Order for Committee read, and discharged; Bill referred to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection *Feb* 28, 187

Dublin Museum of Science and Art [*Expenses*]
c. Res. considered in Committee *Feb* 29, 325
Resolution reported *Mar* 3

DUCKHAM, Mr. T., *Herefordshire*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Cattle Importation—Losses of Cattle at Sea, 1546
  Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 360
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DUNDAS, Hon. J. C., *Richmond*
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DUNRAVEN, Earl of
Egypt (Affairs of the Soudan), 14, 15
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Military Operations on the Red Sea, 636

Dwellings in Crowded Districts—Loans by Public Works Commissioners
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the evils of overcrowding cannot in all cases be adequately met by the enforcement of purely sanitary regulations, and that it is therefore expedient that, in the case of certain public Trusts and Corporations having for their object the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, some relaxation should be made in the rules under which loans are at present granted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners" (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) *Mar* 4, 509; after debate, Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Sir Charles W. Dilke*); after further debate, Previous Question and Motion withdrawn

DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H., *Kent, Mid*
Parliament—Orders of the Day, Motion for Postponement, 102

ECROYD, Mr. W. F., *Preston*
Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Patronage), Res. 937

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Parishes without Public Elementary Schools, Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 3, 365
Pensions to School Teachers, Question, Mr. Round; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 7, 866
Secret Instructions to School Inspectors, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 7, 864
South Lincolnshire Schools, Question, Mr. Compton Lawrance; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 6, 660
The Divided Parishes Act, 1876—*Herefordshire*, Questions, Sir Joseph Bailey; Answers, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 13, 1370
The Education Code, Question, Mr. Grantham; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 4, 504
The Inspectors' Returns, Question, Mr. Beresford Hope; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 3, 349

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Bradford School Board, Questions, Mr. J. G. Talbot, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 7, 862
Case of William Hayward, Questions, Viscount Lewisham, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 14, 1542
Death from Overwork—Cheltenham Board School, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Feb* 29, 221
Suicide of Boy at West Bromwich, Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Feb* 29, 208

Punishments in Board Schools—The Board School at Kidlington, Oxfordshire, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 6, 660
Shakespeare in Board Schools, Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 13, 1342

Education Department—Over-pressure in Elementary Schools—Number of Children under the Ages of Five and Six
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the evidence given before the coroner's jury relative to the death of a child, aged eight years, who had been attending a school at Cheltenham, and whose death, according to the evidence, was caused by inflammation of the membranes of the brain, and hastened by the mental strain from overwork
"That there be laid before this House Return of the number of children under the age of five years and under the age of six years attending schools which are subject to Government inspection" (*The Earl De La Warr*) *Mar* 10, 1184; after short debate, First Motion agreed to; Second Motion withdrawn

EDWARDS, Mr. J. P., *Salisbury*
Egypt—State of Affairs, and Policy of the Government, in the Soudan, 375

EGERTON, Hon. A. F., *Wigan*
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4—Criminal Prosecutions, &c. in Ireland, 1421

EGERTON, Hon. Alan de Tatton, *Cheshire, Mid*
Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers), 2R. 47

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The Soudan
Observations, The Earl of Wemyss; Reply, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *Feb* 26, 7; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Earl Granville*); Motion agreed to
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Military Operations on the Red Sea, Question, Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, Earl Granville; debate thereon *Mar* 6, 615
Battle of Tamanieb—Defeat of Osman Digna, Question, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answer, Earl Granville *Mar* 13, 1310;—*Results of the Defeat*, Question, Earl Beauchamp; Answer, Earl Granville *Mar* 14, 1519

Egypt (*Affairs of the Soudan*)—*Policy of the Government—The Slave Trade*
Moved, "That a copy of the Convention of 1877, relative to the traffic in slaves in Central Asia, be reprinted" (*The Earl De La Warr*) *Feb* 29, 188; after debate, Motion withdrawn

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The Soudan
Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Raikes; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Thomas Brassey *Mar* 15, 1651
Zebehr Pasha, Question, Observations, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Reply, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 29, 238
General Gordon and Zebehr Pasha, Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 6, 668
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Proclamation of General Gordon, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice *Mar* 3, 355; Questions,

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Moved for, " An Address for copies or extracts of any correspondence that has passed since 1881 between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in Council as to 'constitutional robustness' in the case of candidates selected for the Covenanted Civil Service of India " (*The Viscount Enfield*) *Feb* 26, 3 ; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Inhabited House Duty Acts
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Feb* 29, To leave out from " That," add " in order to afford facilities for adapting buildings and parts of buildings for the occupation of the labouring poor, and in order to offer inducements for the erection of houses and blocks of buildings specially suitable for artizans and labourers, it is absolutely essential that the restrictions as to size and mode of construction at present entailed by the Inhabited House Duty Acts should be removed, and the tax repealed " (*Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence*) *v.*, 224 ; Question proposed, " That the words, &c. ;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

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- *Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act*, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 13, 1338
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- *The Irish Church Commissioners—Mr. Eyre W. Preston*, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Feb* 29, 218; *Mar* 10, 1042
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Adjourned Debate [15th February] resumed *Mar* 3, 469; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
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- Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 6, 657

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- Intermediate and Higher Education (Wales)—Aberystwith College, 1615

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- Army Supplementary Estimates (Vote for the Expedition to the Soudan), 1075
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(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 14 [Bill 137]

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Cases Listed at Navan, Question, Mr. Sheil; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 14, 1537

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, Amendment Bill (*Mr. Barry, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 5, 551
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Brodrick*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after long debate; Question put: A. 72, N. 235; M. 163
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Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off [Bill 8]

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(*The Lord Bramwell*)
l. Report * *Feb* 26 (No. 9)
Read 3ª* *Mar* 6
c. Read 1°* (*Mr. Mellor*) *Mar* 10 [Bill 130]

Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 3, 466
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Warton*); after short debate, Question put; A. 20, N. 99; M. 79 (D. L. 26)
Original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 4]

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Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 13, 1335

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(*Mr. Caine, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Brown, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Williamson*)
c. Considered in Committee ; Resolution agreed to, and reported ; Bill ordered ; read 1° * *Mar* 3 [Bill 126]

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c. Ordered * *Mar* 3
Read 1° * *Mar* 4 [Bill 127]
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Marriages Legalization (Stopsley, Beds.) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Bishop of Ely*)
l. Committee * ; Report *Feb* 26 (No. 18)
Read 3ª * *Feb* 29
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Hibbert*) *Mar* 3 [Bill 125]
Read 2° *Mar* 6, 786
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MARTIN, Mr. P., *Kilkenny Co.*
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l. Committee * *Feb* 26 (Nos. 8-20)
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l. Presented ; read 1ª * *Mar* 3 (No. 23)
Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 6, 608

Mercantile Marine
Electrical Communication between Lightships and the Shore, Question, Mr. D. Grant ; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Feb* 28, 61
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Loss of Life at Sea—Mr. Chamberlain's Statement at Birmingham, Questions, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. Norwood ; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 10, 1050

Merchant Shipping Legislation — Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham
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Merv and Afghanistan
Annexation of Merv by Russia—Herat—The Quetta Railway, Question, Sir Henry Tyler ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 28, 92 ; Question, Baron Henry De Worms ; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *Mar* 3, 367
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Papers showing what communications have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government, about Merv and Afghanistan, since the year 1881" (*The Earl of Lytton*) *Mar* 10, 958; after long debate, Motion withdrawn

METROPOLIS (*Questions*)
Education Department
Board Schools, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith ; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 3, 353
Deficiency of School Places, Questions, Mr. Boord, Mr. W. H. Smith ; Answers, Mr. Mundella *Feb* 29, 212

Public Health—Fever Hospital at Winchmore Hill, Observations, Lord George Hamilton ; Reply, Mr. George Russell ; short debate thereon *Feb* 29, 233 ;—*London Bakehouses*, Questions, Mr. Broadhurst ; Answers, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 3, 347
Street Traffic—Private Gates, Bars, &c. in Public Thoroughfares — Legislation, Question, Mr. Montague Guest ; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg *Mar* 3, 354
[See title *Public Health*]

Metropolis Water Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Thomas Chambers*) *Mar* 11, 1197
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Coope*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 152, N. 197; M. 45 (D. L. 33)
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off
Moved, "That the Vote of Mr. Coope be disallowed" (*Mr. Firth*), 1238; after short debate, Question put; A. 36, N. 235; M. 199 (D. L. 34)

Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers) Bill (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Sir John Dalrymple Hay, Mr. Bryce*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Feb* 27, 33
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Coope*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 6]

Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *Mar* 4, 472; Question put, and agreed to
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection" (*Mr. Ritchie*); after debate, Question put, and agreed to
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they do provide a temporary bridge for the accommodation of foot-passengers during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge" (*Mr. Firth*), 487; after short debate, Question put, and negatived
Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they are empowered to receive evidence as to the necessity of erecting a foot-bridge during the reconstruction of Battersea Bridge (*Mr. Firth*)

Metropolitan Board of Works (Various Powers) Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg*) *Mar* 7, 827; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required by Law to be provided for persons of the labouring class, in connection with any of the schemes included in this Bill" (*Mr. Lyulph Stanley*), 838; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to permit any diminution in the accommodation now required to be provided for persons of the labouring class by 'The Artizans' Dwellings Act, 1882'" (*Mr. Lyulph Stanley*), 847; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

[*cont.*

Metropolitan Board of Works (Various Powers) Bill—cont.
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to extend the time for taking the land which is necessary for the formation of the New Street from Southwark Bridge Road to Great Dover Street" (*Mr. Thorold Rogers*), 848; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 6 [Bill 106]

Metropolitan Railway (Park Railway and Parliament Street Improvement) Bill (by Order)
c. Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 10, 1031
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Dodds*) *Mar* 11, 1243; after short debate, Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir Thomas Chambers*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after further debate, Question put; A. 124, N. 64; M. 60 (D. L. 35)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between Westminster and Charing Cross, either by means of a physical junction or by an interchange station" (*Mr. Labouchere*) *Mar* 14, 1529; after short debate, Question, "That the word 'Westminster' stand part of the proposed Instruction" put, and negatived; Question, "That the words 'St. James' Park Station' be there inserted," put, and agreed to
Amendt. after "Charing Cross," to leave out "either," and insert after "physical junction," "if practicable" (*Major Dickson*); Amendment agreed to
Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to provide for a junction of the proposed Railway with the Line of the Metropolitan District Railway between St. James' Park Station and Charing Cross, by means of a physical junction, if practicable, or by an interchange station
Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to inquire to what extent the present block of traffic at Albert Gate will be affected by the proposed station there, and to make such recommendations as they may deem necessary (*Mr. Cubitt*)

MIDLETON, Viscount
Inland Revenue—Succession Duty on Irish Estates, 1310

MILBANK, Sir F. A., *York, N.R.*
Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment, 2R. 58

MILLTOWN, Earl of
Greek Marriages, 2R. 1515, 1516
Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 610, 611

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's Co.*
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4—
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MOORE, Mr. A. J., *Clonmel*
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 577

MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Judge Advocate General), *Denbighshire*
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MORLEY, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Army Supplementary Estimates (Vote for the Expedition to the Soudan), 1119
Egypt (Eastern Soudan)—Military Operations, 1710

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Parliament—Private Bill Legislation, Res. 1573

Mr. Speaker's Retirement Bill
(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Richard Grosvenor*)
c. Resolution in Committee *Feb* 28
Resolution reported, and agreed to, nemine contradicente; Bill ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 29 [Bill 123]
Read 2°* *Mar* 3
Committee*; Report *Mar* 5
Read 3°* *Mar* 6
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl Granville*) *Mar* 7
Read 2ª* *Mar* 10
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Read 3ª* *Mar* 13

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NAPIER of MAGDALA, Lord
Merv and Afghanistan, Motion for an Address, 1013

National Debt Bill
(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)
c. Read 1°* *Mar* 5 [Bill 128]
Read 2°* *Mar* 10
Committee*; Report *Mar* 13
Read 3°* *Mar* 13
[See title *Post Office Savings Banks* (*Perpetual Annuities, &c.*]

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Dockyard Accounts, Question, Mr. Henderson; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 28, 80
Dockyards—Pay of Workmen, Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 29, 214
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  The Royal Yachts, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Courtney *Feb* 29, 223
  Workmen at Plymouth Breakwater, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 29, 215
    [See title *Army—Woolwich Arsenal*]

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  Parliament—Orders of the Day, Motion for Adjournment, 105
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  Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 576
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O'BRIEN, Sir P., *King's Co.*
  Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4—County Court Officers and Magistrates, &c. in Ireland, 1809, 1810
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O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Mallow*
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PALMER, Mr. J. H., *Lincoln*
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COMMONS—
Queen's Speech, Her Majesty's Answer to the Address reported *Feb* 28, 61
Public Accounts — Select Committee nominated *Mar* 7 ; List of the Committee, 956

Election of a Speaker
The Serjeant came, and brought the Mace, and laid it under the Table
The Right Honourable William Ewart Gladstone, addressing himself to the Clerk, acquainted the House that Her Majesty having been informed of the resignation of the Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House, gives leave to the House to proceed forthwith to the choice of a new Speaker
Then it was moved by Mr. Whitbread, "That Arthur Wellesley Peel, Esquire, do take the Chair of this House as Speaker :"—And the Motion being seconded by Mr. Rathbone, and the House unanimously calling Mr. Peel to the Chair, the Honourable Gentleman humbly placed himself at the will of the House ; and he was by Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Rathbone taken out of his place and conducted to the Chair. Then Mr. Speaker-Elect thanked the House for the high honour they had conferred upon him ; and the Mace was laid upon the Table, and Mr. Speaker-Elect was congratulated by the Right Honourable William Ewart Gladstone *Feb* 26
Mr. Speaker acquaints the House that this House having been summoned to the House of Peers, the Lords authorised by Her Majesty's Commission have declared that Her Majesty has approved the choice which this House has made of him as their Speaker, and Mr. Speaker again repeated his acknowledgments to the House *Feb* 27

Mr. Speaker's Retirement
Queen's Answer to Address [25th February] *Feb* 27, 59 ; Committee to consider Her Majesty's Most Gracious Answer To-morrow
Matter considered in Committee *Feb* 28, 106
Moved, "That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said Annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the Office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said Right Honourable Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B." (*Mr. Gladstone*) ; Motion agreed to

PRIVATE BILLS
Storage and Distribution of Private Bills, Question, Colonel Makins ; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 6, 654

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Private Bills*—cont.

Moved, "That Standing Orders Nos. 203 and 214 be amended by leaving out 'Doorkeepers,' and inserting 'Vote Office'" (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *Mar* 11, 1197; Motion agreed to

Proceedings of Committees on Private Bills—Amendment of Standing Order No. 149, Standing Order No. 149 read *Mar* 14, 1520

Amendt. after "them," insert "Together with a Judgment on the case stating the reasons and facts upon which their decision is founded" (*Mr. Robertson*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee of Selection (*Special Report*), The Chairman's Panel *Mar* 5, 607

Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade *Mar* 7, 852; Special Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE

Adjournment of the House (*Rule* 2)—*Egypt—State of Affairs, and Policy of the Government, in the Soudan,* Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Sir Wilfrid Lawson*) *Mar* 3, 371; after debate, Question put; A. 103, N. 150; M. 47 (D. L. 25)

Notices on going into Committee of Supply (*Rule* 12), Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 5, 549

ORDER

Rules and Orders of the House—Questions, Observations, Mr. M'Coan; Reply, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 7, 875

Select Committees—Disclosure of Proceedings, Personal Explanation, Mr. Onslow; Reply, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 14, 1548

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Orders of the Day, Question, Mr. Chaplin; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 28, 94

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Committee on Mr. Speaker's Retirement (Queen's Answer to Address) be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Representation of the People Bill" (*Mr. Gladstone*); after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question put, and agreed to

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Questions, Mr. Acland, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 6, 667; Questions, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 10, 1044; Questions, Colonel Kingscote, Lord John Manners, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Arthur

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Business of the House and Public Business*—cont.

Arnold; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, 1052; Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 13, 1372; —*Supply—Army Supplementary Estimates—Further Votes of Credit,* Questions, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Salt, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 7, 877;—*Contagious Diseases* (*Animals*) *Bill,* Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 14, 1547; —*Orders of the Day,* Observations, The Marquess of Hartington: short debate thereon *Mar* 14, 1550

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Wednesday Sittings, Observations, Mr. Warton *Feb* 29, 239

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The Brighton Election, Questions, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Inderwick; Answers, The Attorney General *Feb* 28, 86

Parliamentary Elections (*Corrupt and Illegal Practices*) *Act—The Hereford Election Petition,* Question, Mr. Raikes, Observations, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, The Attorney General; Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Pulley *Mar* 13, 1347

Parliament—Private Bill Legislation

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 14, To leave out from "That," add "this House adheres to the Resolution of March 22nd 1872, that the system of Private Bill Legislation calls for the attention of Parliament and of Her Majesty's Government, and requires reform; that this House, while maintaining the ultimate control of Parliament over Private Bill Legislation, is of opinion that a Tribunal, to take the place of Private Bill Committees, should be created which should investigate the facts and deal with the evidence relating to Private Bills, and, so far as possible, in the locality affected by such Bills, whether in England, or in Scotland, or in Ireland, and report thereon to Parliament" (*Mr. Craig-Sellar*) *v.* 1554; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

New Peer

Mar 11—Alfred Tennyson, esquire, created Baron Tennyson of Aldworth in the county of Sussex and of Freshwater in the Isle of Wight

Sat First

Mar 10—The Lord Congleton, after the death of his brother

Parliament—House of Commons

New Writs Issued

Mar 4—*For* Cambridgeshire, *v.* the Right honble Sir Henry Bouverie William Brand, G.C.B., now Viscount Hampden, called up to the House of Peers

Mar 13—*For* Huntingdon Borough, *v.* Viscount Hinchingbrook, now Earl of Sandwich, called up to the House of Peers

New Members Sworn

Feb 29—Hon. Murray Edward Gordon Finch-Hatton, *Lincoln County* (*Southern Division*)

John Deasy, esquire, *City of Cork*

Mar 3—William Thackeray Marriott, esquire, *Brighton*

Mar 5—William Meagher, esquire, *Meath County*

Parnell, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*

Ireland—Agricultural Leaseholders, 1354

Magistracy—Captain Plunkett, Cork Divisional Magistrate, 1751

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Representation of the People, Motion for Leave, 140

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Police Huts in County Clare, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 14, 1536

Police Protection to —— Whiteside, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 10, 1015

Pease, Mr. A., *Whitby*

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Peddie, Mr. J. Dick-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*

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Inhabited House Duty Acts, Res. 230

Parliament—Private Bill Legislation, Res. 1584

Scotland—Edinburgh Castle, 1335

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Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings), 2R. 489

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Pender, Mr. J., *Wick, &c.*

Submarine Cables—The International Conference, 216

Percy, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*

Army—Examinations for Promotion—Examination for the Rank of Major, 496

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Percy, Lord A. M. A., *Westminster*

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Playfair, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*

Dwellings in Crowded Districts, Res. 519

Plunket, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 580

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Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Feb* 28, 89

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(*Questions*)

Casual Wards of Metropolitan Workhouses—Refusal of Admission, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Feb* 28, 74

Catholic Children in Bath Workhouse, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 13, 1353

Catholic Children in Nottingham Workhouse, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 13, 1360

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Case of William Davis, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 13, 1329

The Holborn Workhouse—Inspector Hedley, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 6, 654

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The Poland Street Workhouse, Questions, Sir Alexander Gordon, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Grantham, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 13, 1364; Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Mar* 14, 1543

Portugal—Railway Concessions
Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 6, 649

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Appointment of Postmasters, Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 13, 1333
Deliveries in Manchester, Question, Mr. Slagg; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 13, 1338
Mail Service to the North of Ireland, Question, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 4, 493
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Postal Order System—Austria, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Feb* 29, 219
Post Cards, Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 10, 1034
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Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists, Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 10, 1019
The Postal Union (*Circulars and Printed Matter*), Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 10, 1233

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Extension to the Island of Barra, Question, Mr. D. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 10, 1021
Female Clerks in General Post Office, Dublin, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 10, 1015
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Inviolability of Telegrams, Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 13, 1355

Post Office Mail Contract (*British India Steam Navigation Company*)
Moved, "That the Contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company, for the conveyance of the Mails between the Port of Aden and the Port of Sindi, be approved" (*Mr. Courtney*) *Mar* 6, 816; after short debate, Resolution agreed to

Post Office Mail Contract—Communication with Ireland (*Messrs. G. and J. Burns*)
Resolution postponed, after short debate *Mar* 6, 816

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Post Office Mail Contract—Communication with Ireland (*Messrs. G. and J. Burns*)—cont.
Resolved, That the Contract with Messrs. G. and J. Burns, for the Greenock, Ardrossan, and Belfast Mail Service, be approved (*Mr. Courtney*) *Mar* 10, 1183

Post Office Savings Banks (*Perpetual Annuities*)
Indian Loan Act, 1881 (*Terminable Annuity*
c. Considered in Committee *Feb* 29, 325; Resolutions agreed to
Order for Report of Resolutions read *Mar* 3, 468; after short debate, Resolutions reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered
[See title *National Debt Bill*]

Power, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Action of the Mayo Sub-Commissioners, 647
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Alleged Intrusion of the Police, Question, Mr. Sheil; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 3, 340
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Police Protection, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 4, 496
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- *Convict Prisons—Wormwood Scrubbs*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 13, 1341
- *Prison Regulations—Release of Dying Prisoners—Case of Michael Watters*, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 7, 858
- *Suicide of a Prisoner*, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 13, 1337

Public Health
- *Cremation*, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 13, 1356
- *Drainage Works at Twickenham*, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 10, 1043
- *Public Health Act*, 1875, *Section* 193—*Local Board of Health, Trowbridge—"Burgess v. Clarke and Collins*," Questions, Sir John Kennaway; Answers, Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 13, 1326
  - [See title *Metropolis*]

PULESTON, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
- Army Commissariat and Transport Services (Egyptian and Afghan Campaigns), Res. 890
- Parliament—Private Bill Legislation, Res. 1584

PULLEY, Mr. J., *Hereford*
- Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Patronage)—Mr. Messent, Official Receiver at Ipswich, 1049
- Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act—Hereford Election Petition, 1350

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., *Cambridge University*
- Army Supplementary Estimates—Votes of Credit, 873
- Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Patronage)—Mr. Messent, Official Receiver at Ipswich, 1049
- Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Patronage), Res. 951
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- Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings), 2R. 485
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RAMSAY, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
- Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1883-4—Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, 1408, 1410
  - Central Office of the Supreme Court of Judicature, 1399, 1404

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- Poor Law (England and Wales)—Emigration of Pauper Children, 346

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- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 1369
- Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 1283

Real Assets Administration Bill
(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Warton*)
c. Read 2° * *Feb* 27 [Bill 98]

Redistribution of Seats Bill
(*Admiral Sir John Hay, Mr. James A. Campbell*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 131]

REID, Mr. R. T., *Hereford*
- Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act—Hereford Election Petition, 1348

RENDEL, Mr. S., *Montgomeryshire*
- Intermediate and Higher Education (Wales)—Aberystwith College, 1589, 1619
- Parliament—Business of the House, 1551

Representation of the People Bill
(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate*)
c. Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People in the United Kingdom" *Feb* 28, 106
- Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "no Bill to amend the Representation of the People of the United Kingdom will be satisfactory which does not provide an increased number of representatives for the Kingdom of Scotland up to the full measure which justice demands, according to population and the share of revenue which it contributes" (*Admiral Sir John Hay*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Blennerhassett*); after further short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned
- Debate resumed *Mar* 3, 393; after long debate, Amendt. withdrawn
- Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 119]
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  (*Mr. John Hollond, Mr. Francis Buxton, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 132]

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(*Mr. Dodds, Mr. Charles Palmer, Mr. Barran, Mr. Isaac Wilson*) [Bill 24]
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 12, 1292
  Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Warton*): Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
  Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee

Yorkshire Registries Bill
(*Mr. Dundas, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Guy Dawnay, Sir Andrew Fairbairn, Mr. Charles Wilson*) [Bill 80]
c. Read 2°,* and committed to Select Committee on Yorkshire Land Registries

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END OF VOLUME CCLXXXV., AND SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1884.

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BIBL. LONDIN